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NIMROD ABROAD.

BY

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"THE CHASE, THE TURF, AND THE ROAD,"

ETC. ETC.

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NIMROD ABROAD.

CHAPTER I.

SEASON IN FRANCE.

Calais—the advantages of a temporary residence—Expenses of Housekeeping—of a—making—Calais tradesmen—Butchers' meat—The Opera at the Fair and the Vaudeville—French talent and acting—French manners—The French country gentleman—Style in Paris—French economy—A refined tradesman—French civility—La belle France—French vanity and obstinacy—French manners—French charitableness and vivacity—Amusements of the lower orders—Horses of the fair on a village—Want of cleanliness in the French.

As it is the design of these pages to record my observations on the manners and customs of the countries in which I have resided during a ten years' absence from England, I shall pass by all preliminary matter, and commence my remarks at the period of first setting my foot on a foreign shore, of Calais;

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a city, which, notwithstanding it once cut a conspicuous figure in English Annals, requires for itself little detailed notice. As, however, its position gives it peculiar facilities and advantages as a temporary resort for my countrymen, it may be desirable to dwell on its distinctive features for a few moments.

Calais is rather a pretty town, and very much improved in many respects, since I first knew it—particularly as to the cleanliness of the streets and lanes; although further improvement is desirable. Its noble church, partly built by the English, is its chief ornament; but its astounding feature is the number and magnificence of its hotels, two-and-twenty in number, with about as much business doing in *all* of them, collectively, as would suffice for six. The country about Calais is the ugliest my eyes ever beheld; notwithstanding which, taking into consideration matters of more importance,—such as the speedy communication with England; its noble pier, extending nearly a mile into the sea; its fine range of sands, as sound as a brick floor; and the salubrity of the air — at least to those who have sound lungs ;—Calais, or its vicinity, is, in my opinion, one of the most desirable spots in France for an Englishman to reside at, whose ambition does not lead him at once to the capital of *la belle* France. It is called a dull town, but I do not admit the charge. If the daily arrival of three steam-boats, and often of double that number, together with at least half a dozen public coaches, with families *en route*, do not satisfy the gapers, it is hard to say what would. And amongst the advantages of Calais to the generality of John Bulls and their ladies, is the fact of almost every tradesman in the town speaking, or at least understanding, the English language.

The splendid new rooms, and the baths, are certainly a great acquisition to the place; and if they had been built ten instead of two years ago, the town would have found its account, and not have been nearly eclipsed, as it is, by the superior allurements of Boulogne.

What Calais was, previously to the last

peace, I am unable to say; but on the authority of Mr. Brummel, there were only thirteen houses in the Grande Place which had glass in the windows of them. That English money has made it what it now is, no one will be inclined to deny; and when I first knew it, it was in a most flourishing condition, which cannot now be said of it.

Of the expenses of housekeeping, or of what is expressed by the broader term of "living," in the town and neighbourhood of Calais, I am now pretty well able to form a judgment. In the articles for eating, merely, including grocery, I consider there is not more than five per cent. difference between this part of France (including Boulogne) and England; but be it remembered, that, for obvious reasons, this part of France is the dearest in the kingdom. It is in the cellar that the great saving is effected; next, in taxes and house rent. My own taxes, although I have two horses and a four-wheel carriage, only amount to twenty-six francs per annum; and, for a house pleasantly situated and detached, with three sitting-rooms, with large garden and paddock, double coach-house, stable, &c., I only pay 26*l*. per annum. For 2*s*. per bottle, I drink, purchased by the "piece," as good claret as I would desire ; and there is no doubt but that the cheapness of vinous and spirituous liquors is the inducement to many thousands of persons living in this country, and also the cause of their dying here.

The lace trade, carried on here chiefly by the English, is now flourishing to an unheard-of extent. Operatives, as they are called, are earning from two to three pounds a-week, whilst their employers are getting rich. It is only lately that spotted lace has been manufactured by machinery, and the trade in that article is both flourishing and profitable, but confined to the English ; in a company of whom, as the inventors, is the patent invested. Still the introduction of machinery here, and its occasional beneficial results, have not been without their accompanying, and, we may say, natural evils. By giving an unnatural stimulus to an increase of population, it has spread poverty whenever the new source of demand for labour has removed, and produced much misery.

I dealt with the same tradesmen during the whole time I resided in the neighbourhood of Calais: I have found them correct in their accounts, uniformly civil and accommodating. They are sometimes accused of having one price for the English, and another for the French; but I have not been able to detect that species of imposition. I am, however, able to state, that one of this class of persons has admitted that he cheats the English whenever he can; but, within my knowledge, he forms a solitary instance. It is possible that a little latitude of conscience may be exercised by some, in making those who do pay contribute towards loss sustained by those who do not pay; but I do not speak from experience on this point.

I have been told that I have been the means, unconsciously, of my butcher making a fortune, by telling him that the English did not, if they could avoid it, eat old cow beef. On the strength of this assurance, he took to killing oxen and heifers, and consequently got the custom of almost all the best English families in the town and neighbourhood, and a fine business he now has. I think it is Fielding who says, "the French would make the best cooks in the world, if they had but meat;" and Dr. Johnson saw no meat in Paris fit for any place but a prison; but if those celebrated writers were to re-appear upon earth, I could shew them as good beef and veal in my butcher's shop, in Calais, as they would wish to sit down to. The mutton looks fat and tempting, but is apt to be flavourless, and from the following cause: the sheep, in this part of France, are kept badly when young; but when intended for the butcher, their condition is forced by high keep, such as corn and beans, to the highest degree possible; thus creating a mass of newly-acquired, but somewhat insipid, flesh and fat. Their confinement also, at this time, may have something to do with their want of flavour.

A word more respecting French tradesmen. There is an independent manner about them, together with a show of equality in their own estimation, which forcibly strikes an Englishman. That my baker should smoke his pipe whilst he was writing me an acquittance to a paltry bill of eighty francs, only surprised me a little; but I confess I marvelled at a scene I witnessed two years ago, in Paris. Whilst on a visit to the Prince of Moskowa, I accompanied him to a silversmith's shop, for the purpose of looking at a cup, which he thought might answer for the Chantilly races of that year, to be called the Pembroke Cup.* When his carriage stopped at the door, so far from there being either the master or a shopman to usher the Prince into the show-room, there was only a little girl, who called out, "Mamma, here's a gentleman wants you!"

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* So called, because the subscription towards the purchase of it was entered into at a dinner given by the Earl of Pembroke, in Paris, to some of the leading members of the French Jockey Club. This cup, won by Lord Henry Seymour's celebrated racer, Giles Scroggins, is a curious antique, so thickly beset with precious stones, as to remind me of the consecrated bowl, said to have been exhibited by Æmilius in his triumph over Perseus, the Macedonian king.

Mamma appeared, and in, to me, a state of disgusting *deshabille;* when the first thing the Prince did, was to present her with a check for two or three thousand francs, for a former account. He then looked at the cup, which, after a discussion as to its merits and price, he ordered his servant to put into his carriage. And how did Mamma conduct herself on this occasion? Why, I once or twice, at furthest, heard the monosyllable "Prince," tacked on to the answer of either "*oui*" or "*non;*" but during the discussion about the cup, she took a pin from out of her dress, and leaning her elbow against a pillar, very quietly picked her teeth.

No remark fell from my gallant friend on this occasion; but I afterwards had a proof that this sort of apparent disrespectful behaviour is not exactly relished by the French aristocracy. I accompanied a peer of France, on another occasion, to one of the government offices, he having occasion to see the principal person belonging to it. Instead of driving into the court-yard, he quitted his carriage, and walked into an ante-room, at once asking for the person he was in pursuit of. I was certainly struck with the reception he met with from the clerk we found there, and so must have been the peer, for, on his return to the carriage, he told me he had complained of his conduct to the minister, adding, emphatically, these words: "I have taught that fellow how to treat a peer of France." It is probable that the pea-jacket the peer had on at the time —not the most aristocratic garb—might have led to the no doubt unintentional slight.

It is important for my accuracy of observation, that within a month after this encomium on the general honesty and fairness in the dealings of French tradesmen was written, no less than seventy-four bakers were brought before the tribunal of Simple Police in Paris, fifty-eight of whom were condemned to the maximum penalty for bread under weight. Bakers and millers, however, have ever been remarkable for what is called *tolling* the material that passes through their hands, and so they will probably continue to be to the end of time. I have baked my own bread for the last two years, by which I save nearly a third of the cost, but I cannot say I have ever detected, in what is called baker's bread, in this part of the country, what has given me reason to believe it has been in any way adulterated.

In serving in their shops, French tradesmen greatly need a lesson from English ones, in the making up of their parcels. Instead of being neatly papered and pack-threaded, and the articles put into double paper when required, they are merely twisted up, in the most slovenly manner, at the ends, without regard to either neatness or safety. As to the smart shopman, *à l'Anglaise*, with his curls, his brooches, and his rings, and his "eloquently-lying tongue," they know nothing of him in France.

A circumstance has recently occurred at Calais which tends to corroborate the character for general liberality of conduct in French tradesmen. An English gentleman, finding himself in difficulties, crossed the Channel to England, leaving his pecuniary matters in a very unsatisfactory state. As soon as it was known that he was gone, his butcher and baker waited on his wife, and told her that they should serve her as usual, being convinced that her husband was an honest man, and that he would come back and pay them sooner or later. I should state that the gentleman in question had been resident several years in Calais or its neighbourhood, and continues to be so.

The style of living of a French "country gentleman" is far inferior, in comfort and respectability of appearance, to that adopted in England by the same class. On being admitted to walk through the domain of a gentleman of very considerable fortune, in the neighbourhood of St. Omer, I found the house was of large dimensions; the grounds extensive, yet by no means neatly kept; but, although the family was at home, not a servant, excepting the gardener, who shewed me the premises, was to be seen. I looked into the stables, which were excellent, but not a horse was there; I cast my eyes up to the chimneys, and saw no smoke. "Where are the red-breeched footmen?" said I to myself. It was in vain that I sought them, either inside the house or out. During my visits to the Prince of Moskowa, however, in Paris, I saw what I should have seen in our own Grosvenor-square — every thing in good keeping, and society of the best stamp. There was also much that was *à la manière Anglaise* in his hotel, which was, of course, very agreeable to me; and many times would he strike the table after dinner, to remind his guests that they were to speak English, in compliment to his English friends, exclaiming at the moment, "Speak English. We are all English here." Neither were we deprived of the pleasantest of all hours, perhaps, to an Englishman—the one after dinner was ended—as has hitherto been too much the case in all continental society.

The French people certainly read us a useful and instructive lecture on one subject, and that is, economy in pecuniary matters. "You English gentlemen," said a very respectable Calais tradesman to me, "do not know how to live. There is my father, who has retired from business, living comfortably in the country on eight hundred francs (32*l.*) a year."

"Impossible!" I said.

"Go and see him," was the reply; "he will give you a good dinner, and a bottle of good wine."

Undoubtedly much is gained in France by the almost total disregard to appearances in what are considered trifles. For example:—There is a gentleman of good fortune, residing a few miles from Calais, to be seen every day in the summer coming into the town in his cabriolet, with the provision for his horse (a bundle of grass or hay) suspended from the axletree of his carriage! And the carriage itself! Why a country butcher in England would not be seen in it at market. But on the subject of carriages, I met with a just rebuke from a stranger with whom I was in conversation in Paris. Seeing a well-dressed couple in a dreadfully ill-conditioned cabriolet, drawn by a wretched horse, I made an observation on the turn-out, concluding by saying, that in England no respectable female would be seen in such—it being a private one.

"Ah," said the gentleman, "your English ladies have nothing between a coach and a wheelbarrow. We care not much for the look of a carriage, the purpose of it being merely to carry us in safety."

In fact, the general disregard of appearances, as to equipages and servants, on the Continent, is no small recommendation of it to persons of moderate means.

The bad feeling of the French towards the English has greatly diminished within the last few years, and continues to diminish. I can say, as regards myself, that I receive more salutations from the country people in my rides or walks here than I could ever expect to receive in my own country. Many times, in my immediate neighbourhood, they salute me in my own name; they are uniformly civil, and seem to take a pleasure in affording any information that may be required of them. In fact, I have long since found out that by being civil to a Frenchman you win his respect; and, also, that a kind act bestowed upon him is sure to meet with a return.

As far as my experience and observation qualify me for the task, I will offer an opinion on the leading characteristics of the French people, commencing with what may be called their foibles, and proceeding to their virtues, many of which owe their birth to their foibles.

The French undoubtedly possess the foible, if it be one, of placing a high estimation on *la belle France.* And who can wonder at this? It is a noble country. Frenchmen imagine it is an honour to be born in France; she is the rose of perfection in their eyes, and as such do they fight and die for her. But, in many respects, this foible is injurious to them, operating as a bar to improvement in the common transactions of life. I can give two instances within the range of my own experience, which, though trifling in themselves, are not the less characteristic. Two years ago some labourers were digging a wide drain near my house. I warned them of the impropriety of making the banks perpendicular. "They will fall in after the first hard frost," said I, adding, that I had had some experience in such matters. All that I got in return was "*Non, non—jamais.*" Well, they are, at this time, cutting the banks afresh, a great portion of them having fallen in last winter. Again: I saw a man trying to make a horse draw a loaded cart into a yard in Calais, the approach to which was somewhat on the ascent, and the pavement slippery. He three times failed for want of footing. "Put a little litter out of the stable under his feet," said I, "and he will do what you require." "*Non, non,*" was the reply, and the consequence was, the horse fell on his knees at the next attempt, and seriously injured himself. Then, look at the houses they *now* build. Nine out of ten, in these parts at least, are after the very same plan of those built a hundred years ago, and in the same inconvenient form.

If the charge of insincerity be substantiated against the French people, I conceive it to be, in great measure, the consequence of their politeness; the possession of which no one who has been amongst them will deny them. Not wishing to be thought capable of refusing a request, or of not conferring a favour, they are apt to make promises which they never intend to perform. I here allude to what may be called matters of no vital importance. For example: Were a Frenchman to tell me he would pay me a sum of money before two o'clock to-morrow, I should depend upon him as much as I should upon one of any other nation; but did he tell me he would come and cut my hair, shoe my horse, mend my windows, send home my boots, *by any specified time*, I would lay fifty to one against the performance of the promise; and, if it could be proved, the like odds that he never intended keeping it when it was made. He could not, however, refrain from assuring you that your wishes would be complied with.

In a small way, I had a convincing proof of this in the late mayor of the parish in which I live. I waited upon him to complain of the very bad state of one of the two roads leading from my house to Calais. He received me with the greatest politeness; thanked me (in English) for the trouble I had taken in representing the bad state of the road, and concluded by asking me at what hour on the morrow I would meet him to inspect it? I fixed the hour of three, and kept my appointment, but no Monsieur le Maire appeared; and although four or five summers have passed over it, there is the road, not in *statu quo*, but very considerably worse.

Now it is certainly something to be treated with politeness, which, though not one of the cardinal virtues, has been ranked as the first among those of the second order, as contributing much to the happiness of society. But, surely, the great use of politeness is, not to make promises without the intention of performing them, but to correct the partiality, and to check the rapacity, of self-love. As a substitute for benevolence, it is the very worst of masks.

The French are allowed to possess a native cheerfulness and vivacity beyond any people upon earth, and I am not inclined to dispute the fact. Their social habits tend to make them such. Gentlemen in France, in all periods of life, and even in advanced age, do not associate much with one another, but spend all their leisure hours with the ladies—with the young, the gay, and the happy. We Englishmen are apt to condemn this as frivolous and ridiculous, believing it to be more proper for persons of the same age, of the same sex, and of similar dispositions and pursuits, to associate together. But if we examine attentively into these sentiments of propriety, we shall find them not built on a solid foundation. Nature has made no individual, nor any class of people, independent of the rest of their species, or sufficient for their own happiness; and, in a due mixture of social intercourse, the rashness and vivacity of early life are tempered by the gravity, the caution, and the wisdom of age; whilst the timidity and languor incident to declining years, are supported and assisted by the courage and confidence of youth. I certainly have witnessed a degree of cheerfulness in old people in France, beyond what I have experienced in those of my own country, and I attribute it to this due blending of the elements of society. There is a *gaieté de cœur*, generally, in the French people, that tends much to prejudice other nations in their favour. Nor is this confined to the upper and intermediate classes; the dancing and skittle-playing, so universal among the lower orders, the whole population of a French town turning out to see boys climb a greasy pole, or walk along the greased bowsprit of a vessel, to obtain some trifling prize, must convince those who have witnessed them that easiness to be pleased is a universal characteristic of the people. Until I witnessed the fact, I could not have believed that I should ever see three officers of the French line, mounted on the wooden horses of what is called a roundabout, in a public garden, enjoying themselves as much as if they had been just out of the nursery. Then again, look into those time-killing places, the public *cafés*, and see the various descriptions of persons deeply engaged in playing *domino!* How fortunate would it be for my countrymen could they be so easily and innocently amused!

The French place themselves at the head of human civilization, and perhaps justly so. To my mind, however, it is difficult to separate cleanliness from refinement, and doubtless the general habits of the French people are not so cleanly as they should be. This failing, indeed—which those who run may read—too often amounts to indecency—indelicacy would be a term too mild for it; and on this point the English nation reads them a lesson that it would be well they should profit by. Even Paris and its inhabitants form no exception to this remark.

CHAPTER II.

Sunday in France—The English on Sunday—Startling facts—The moral habits of the lower orders—Their singular honesty—Causes of it—Anecdotes—The Duchess of Lucca's diamonds—Capital punishment in France—Good effects of delaying it—Sympathy with malefactors—Temperance of the French people—French doctors—Mortality in France—Burial of the dead—No coroners—French priests—Comfort of the lower orders—French labourers—Paucity of country gentlemen—The law of primogeniture—Sporting in France—Racing—Fox-hunting.

THE manner of spending Sunday in France—in a country at the head of human civilization—is certainly startling. To begin—all those persons who follow their usual avocations on this day, must be subject to one or the other of these imputations :

they must either not believe in the divine command which relates to the observance of that day, or, believing it, disregard it. That it is to a vast extent disregarded in this part of France, probably beyond most others, must be evident to a mere passer-by. Almost every occupation of man and beast proceeds as regularly on Sunday as on week-days—even to the fallowing of land by the plough. Now I am one of those who think that, in very ticklish harvest weather, the act of carrying bread-corn on the Sabbath is a praiseworthy one, and we have direct Scripture authority for it; but to see no difference made between Sunday and other days, in the ordinary business of life, is equally offensive to religion and to humanity. Again, Sunday is the great day for the enjoyment of the sports of the field, and, I am sorry to say, a number of the English residents are guilty of this profanation.

But, as regards the French, the "startling" part of the business is this: In the Grande Place, in Calais, during the hour of divine service, a mountebank will be at work, with a crowd of all descriptions of persons looking on. If I stand at my door on a Sunday evening I can hear the sound of three big drums, in three different directions, announcing that dancing is going on to the sound of each. The skittle-grounds are in full play, and the theatre is overflowing. Every shop in the town has been open, and tailors on their shopboards, and shoemakers on their stools, have been at work until it has been time to dress themselves for the dance, the skittle-ground, or the theatre.

Yet on the night of the day on which all this is going on—*i. e.*, in the summer season—myself and my household retire to bed without a shutter being closed of the lower windows of the house, and feeling quite as secure from molestation of any sort as if a file of grenadiers were keeping sentry at the doors. If I look on at the dance, or the skittle-playing, I hear no coarse, blasphemous swearing, as I should in my own country; no excess in any way;

but all good-humour and *politeness;* and this, in many cases, amongst nearly the lowest order of society! Then if pleasure or business gives me occasion to be abroad during the night, either on horseback or on foot, I have no more apprehensions for my personal safety than if I were at home in my bed.

A question here arises: Do, or do not, the French nation assume too much, when they place themselves at the head of human civilization? I myself can only answer it in the words of Addison's knight—namely, that "much may be said on both sides." That there is something "startling" in the contemplation of these facts, cannot, I think, be denied; and especially so in reference to the proceedings which have lately taken place in my own country, under the new Police Act, touching the observance of Sunday. I may, perhaps, be allowed to say, that each country appears to have recourse to extremes; and that a happy medium might be desirable.

In these remarks, however, on the observance of Sunday in this part of France, I must not be supposed to insinuate that there is no observance of the sabbath, by the persons who follow their week-day occupations on that day. To what extent it is carried on, in a ratio to the numbers in question, I cannot determine; but a certain portion of them would be found to have attended early mass, and afterwards resumed their working dress.

Touching what the French call the *morale* of the people, I can mention a fact highly to their credit, and from my own personal knowledge. A well-known English merchant, resident in Calais, has two small chateaux, about nine miles distant, at one of which he occasionally resides in the summer, whilst in the winter it remains totally unoccupied. In his yard, a few winters back, stood a large heap of fagots, close to a by-road, and not a hundred yards from a village in which very many poor persons reside. Be it also observed, that the said fagots were not stacked in any order, but heaped promiscuously on each other. A friend of mine, whom I was in the habit of visiting, occupied the other chateau, situated behind the one in question, and therefore no protection was afforded from that circumstance to the said stack of fagots. He, however, watched it narrowly, and although not overlooked from his or from any other house, and the winter was a hard one, not a single fagot was taken.

Now I asked myself the following two questions: First, in the part of England in which I last resided, how many of these fagots would have been left? Secondly, to what cause was their preservation to be attributed? The answer to the first at once presented itself. Not one would have been left! For the second, I was obliged to apply to a Frenchman for a solution. "It is the influence which the priest has over the description of persons who might have helped themselves to those fagots," said he. "Had they stolen any of them, they could not have gone to confession until they had made restitution for the value of all they had possessed themselves of."

The moral state of the French people may be judged of by several trifling circumstances. Look at their locks—those objects which, in England, are called, and justly called, "masterpieces of smithery." As a protection to property, French locks are not worth a shilling a dozen. But on the subject of locks, or rather of no locks, I have a word to say in reference to another country, in which Punch and Judy are to be seen performing on a Sunday morning, and where business is transacted as on a week-day. When at Dobleran races, in Germany, in 1828, I was walking with Count Bassewitz, when his groom asked him for some money. "Come to my lodgings," said he; where, opening a drawer, *which had no lock*, he gave him, in my presence, the sum he required, out of about a hundred louis-d'ors. Observe, reader, this was during the race week, when the town was overflowing with strangers. On my noticing this circumstance to the father confessor (an Irishman) of the Duchess of Lucca, he made this reply: "There is nothing extraordinary in that; if you will call on me when the duchess is out in her carriage, I will shew you ten thousand pounds' worth of diamonds lying on her toilette table."

It is asserted, and perhaps with truth, that although the commission of crime in France is not near so frequent as in many other countries, England included, still, when a Frenchman is resolved on carrying his point, he will go to the extreme of atrocity to do so. I am, however, enabled to state, that during the last eight years, only one case of murder and two of housebreaking have come to my knowledge in that part of France where I have chiefly resided; and one of the latter (a burglary in a bank in the town of Calais) was so adroitly accomplished as to be laid to the charge of my countrymen. The third was a burglary in a private house, committed by a near neighbour to me, who was sent to the galleys for five years, and returned a few months back; and on his return, a scene occurred illustrating the natural levity of the French character.

"You have had a child in my absence,"

said the husband to his wife, "which cannot be mine."

"True," replied the wife, "and what of that? You indulged in one propensity, and I have indulged in another; we are only even on that score."

And the mention of this circumstance leads me to remark on a great preventive of one species of crime in France, and that of the deepest die; I allude to infanticide, which very rarely occurs, by reason of the provision made in the public hospitals for the reception of illegitimate children of parents ill able to support them.

A late assizes at St. Omer, however, have brought to light a decided case of murder, and perpetrated with a degree of deliberation that stamps it with the blackest dye. It appears that one of the criminals gave the other a thousand francs to shoot a person who stood in the way of some property to which he was to succeed at his decease. They were both sentenced to die, but not till two months after the sentence was passed. This suspending the fatal axe over the head of the criminal, for an indefinite period, is said to have the best effect. Had the culprit been led to the scaffold, as with us, within the space of two or three days, the scene, and the cause of it, would have been all but forgotten in a week, by this light-hearted people. But not so now; the case of these men, their wretched situation in prison, with the guillotine before their eyes, and the stain of the crime on the names of themselves and their connexions, continue to be matter of discourse, as the extended period of their suffering has given space for it. To the philanthropist, this may appear an act of unmitigated severity; but as the end of all punishments of this nature is, the deterring others from subjecting themselves to a similar fate, and thus affording security to society, the more notoriety that can be given to the example made in the persons of the offenders, the more weight will it surely have with certain descriptions of the community, if not with all.

From all I can learn, there has been only one instance of capital punishment in Calais, in the memory of the oldest English resident, the malefactor having been guillotined in the Grande Place. I saw a man exposed in the pillory, on the same spot, a few years back, for theft, and another for an assault upon a female, each of whom—the first in particular, a good-looking fellow—excited the sympathy of the crowd, and had much money given to him during the period of his punishment.

The French are little addicted to the vice of drinking to excess, although almost every fourth house in many streets furnishes them with their favourite liquor; but my observation has led me to be of opinion that, within the last two years, this vice has been on the increase.

France is celebrated for clever surgeons; but in their treatment of diseases I consider them half a century behind us. They wait for directing symptoms; and in the meantime the patient slips through their fingers. They fix periods to diseases, consult the state of the moon, and trust to simples notoriously slow in their operation, instead of having recourse to compounds which would at once reach the cause.

I have reason to believe that the proportion of deaths to the population is *greatly* more in France than in England. I have, ever since I commenced residing in this country, been forcibly struck with the number of funerals, and also with the number of craped hats among the country-people. I have taken the trouble to remark them on market days, and found them to an almost appalling amount. I account for this in three ways: First, the system of living is of so unsubstantial a nature among the middle and lower orders, that little resistance can be expected to acute diseases. Secondly, the absurd and dangerous practice of the generality of their medical men, in waiting for directing symptoms, critical days, and crises, must occasion numerous fatal terminations to diseases which would have yielded at once to prompt and vigorous measures. When my gardener was taken ill with a violent cold three years ago, his doctor pronounced that he would have a forty days' illness! Accordingly, the poor devil was condemned to a forty days' fast, and had it not been for some physic from my kitchen, body and soul would have sunk together under the regimen prescribed.

It is a well-known fact, that whilst the cholera raged in Calais and its vicinity, not more than six English persons fell a sacrifice to it, whilst upwards of a hundred and fifty fatal cases occurred among the French. Amongst the soldiers in France, also, the mortality is great, evidently the consequence of unsubstantial food; and, as I should say, not enough of it, for men exposed to night air, and that of the worst description, when on guard in the immediate neighbourhood of the fosses which surround the towns.

I attribute increased mortality in the rural districts to insufficiency of clothing. Look at even a French farmer—to say nothing of his labourer—on his road to market in the winter. What a cold and comfortless appearance he makes, in his loose and thin blue frock, his equally loose and thin linen trowsers; and it is more than even betting, that he has no stockings under his ankle-boots. Then the labouring population,—who ever sees one of them warmly clad, as they are in our country, in thick woollen jackets, and other articles of dress proportionably weather-tight? Not one French labourer in ten would be found to have stockings on for at least ten months in the year; and I have seen numbers of them stockingless in the depth of winter. Who then can be surprised that death should walk with a hastened step through a land which seems to invite his presence; for, in addition to the above, the houses of the labouring poor, as well as of the majority of the farmers, are generally deficient in the protection and comfort required by men who have been exposed to fatigue under the influence of every description of weather.

The proceedings of the lower orders of the French people on a death occurring in their family, greatly resemble those of the ancient Romans. The Romans had the custom of exhibiting a sign, by which the house was known to contain a corpse; and this was done by fixing branches of the cypress-tree near the entrance. The French merely plait some clean wheaten straw, in the form of a cross, and place it in front of the house. Then again, as was the case with the Romans, the funeral song is sung by persons hired for the purpose, as the corpse is being conveyed to the grave; and, as was also the ancient practice, an oration is occasionally spoken over the grave. But, contrary to the custom of the Romans, there are no noisy lamentations, no tearing of the hair, no exclamations against the gods, amongst this Christian people, whose deportment on the occasion is exactly what it ought to be.

There is one circumstance touching the burial of the dead in France, which, I think, calls for a reform; I allude to the uncoffined soldier, who is too often cast into his grave like a dog into a hole, without the ceremonies of religion being performed. One cannot reconcile this with the generally high state of civilization which exists in France—and in a Christian country too! The very idea would have struck terror into the stoutest heart of ancient Rome or warlike Greece, whose people held nothing, except life itself, in greater value than the decent and proper burial of the dead.

There is another defect in the administration of this country, as relates to the dead—the want of the office of coroner, and the inquest held in his court. There is something approaching to it, in the *procès verbal*, but wanting the rigid and searching inquiry into causes of sudden death that takes place in England, which is a most powerful check to the crime of murder, affording means of satisfactorily accounting for premature death by accident or otherwise. An instance of this recently occurred in my own experience. A young English gentleman (as the newspapers informed the public) blew out his brains at Calais. I received a letter from one of his relations, asking me for some particulars of his death, which he says " is involved in mystery." There was, however, no " mystery" in the case, the cause having been detailed by the suicide himself, in a letter to his mother; nevertheless, how much more satisfactory would have been an investigation by the coroner into the melancholy affair. Again: a boy of fourteen years of age, of English parents, was found starved to death in a late severe frost, and this from sheer neglect of his unfeeling parents. Now in England this would have been a case for a coroner's inquest; and no doubt but the parents of the poor boy, who was imbecile in mind, would have received a severe reprimand from the jury.

The French bury their dead with much decency and decorum, and where the means of the surviving friends are equal to the expenses, with no little pomp. But I am inclined to think they oftentimes bury them too soon: the interment generally taking place on the second day after the decease. A curious piece of ceremony was observed in the case of an eminent surgeon, who died in Calais about two years back. Aware of his approaching dissolution, he had a smart surtout, frogged and tasselled *à la militaire*, made for the occasion, and in this was his corpse clad, for the purpose of *sitting* in state. It was placed in a chair, and exposed to the view of all who chose to see it, for the space of two days. No doubt but the doctor found his precedent for this in the history of the ancient Romans, whose bodies, after death, were wrapped in the gowns they had worn when alive; and, if public men, in the particular garment of their office.

My intercourse with the clergy of this part of France enables me to say but little of them, since it merely amounts to an annual visit from the vicar of the parish in which I reside, to solicit my subscription for the poor. From all I see of them, however, they appear to be a most respectable and unassuming class; and judging from the fact of their being so frequently on the move amongst their parishioners, their duties must be rigidly observed by them. The income of the generality of them must be very small, often not exceeding fifty pounds a year.

From my almost daily habit of riding or walking through the retired parts of this country, I am, to a certain extent, able to speak of the situation of the labouring poor. It is, in one respect, superior to that of my own countrymen, inasmuch as, should the cow be wanting, the large garden-plot and the pig are pretty general amongst them. Their wages, it is true, are lower than that of English labourers, but then their wants are fewer, and thus the account is balanced. They make their articles of food go much further than the English labourer does; and what they do gain by their bodily labour, is never wasted in intemperance, but spent on their families, on the real necessaries of life. I am told that some of their employers give them cider to drink in harvest; but I confess I have never seen them supplied with it. A French labourer, however, by having made his repast of either soup or coffee, is not tormented with thirst, as those of our country are, after eating solid and more exciting food. That occasionally the extremities of indigence are to be found in a French labourer's cottage, is too true; and there is much suffering from severe weather; so much so, I am informed, that it is not unusual to see several entire families huddled together in one house, to avail themselves of animal heat, emanating from their own bodies. The children of the labouring poor appear to me to be better dressed than those of my own country.

The comparative paucity of French gentlemen residing on their estates in France, is very hurtful to the poor. A frequent intercourse with the common people opens our eyes to their wants, and few persons can see misery without a feeling of compassion, which, if excited for the moment, is either blunted or destroyed amidst the cold-hearted splendour of a town life. Here England stands alone; there is no country under the sun in which the poor are so benefited by the taste of its aristocracy for a country life. I will refer to a singular instance of this. When Sir Peter Pole broke up his establishment in Hampshire, I learned from the overseer of the poor, that the effect the absence of the family at "the great house" had on the poor's rate of the parish, was to increase it just fifty per cent.!

I am sorry to hear there exists a party in England favourable to the abolition of the law of primogeniture, the evils of its absence being so apparent in France, in the neglected condition of the chateaux, and the defective state of agriculture. Mr. James Cobbett, in his Ride through France, thus speaks of this scattering law, as he calls it: "The contrast between Normandy and the rest of France—not only as regards the appearance of the people, but as regards that of their houses, the face of their country, the cultivation of their farms, and all that, in short, which strikes the eye of a traveller as he goes along the road, is so very remarkable, that one cannot help inquiring the *reason* why it should be so. By some persons (and these apparently not the least intelligent) this striking difference is mainly ascribed to the wide difference between the ancient laws and usages of Normandy and those of the rest of France, and especially as relating to the laws affecting the disposal and distribution of real property. Before the revolution, the law of primogeniture and entail appears to have existed in a very extensive degree in Normandy, while it did not so exist in the other provinces of the kingdom, except with regard to a comparatively small part of the community. . . . All is now laid level. The law does, in fact, make a man's will for him; and it divides and subdivides his property, till, in some cases, a farm of a hundred acres is, at the death of the owner, cut up into allotments of six or seven acres! It has been said, that the law of primogeniture *has but one child*, and that it devotes all the rest to beggary. On the other hand, it is said, that even if that be admitted, the law of primogeniture has an advantage over *the law of scattering*, as it may be called; for that the law of primogeniture had *one* child, while the other had no child at all; that the law of primogeniture devotes (allowing it to do this) to beggary *all but one,* while the law of scattering saves *not one*, but disperses the whole, and makes them *all beggars.* For if a man possess an estate, each child is brought up as the child of the owner of the estate; but what is each but a beggar (compared with his father), when each possesses a dozen or two acres of land?"

All the foregoing observations were corroborated to me by a French gentleman in the neighbourhood of Dunkirk, whom I visited, for the purpose of seeing his system of agriculture, which I was given to understand was upon improved principles, the result of his having spent a fortnight at Holkham. "The abolition of the law of primogeniture," said he, "has dispersed thousands of families who had been on the same spot for centuries; has greatly injured the cultivation of land, and caused a scarcity of timber; and I can shew you men labouring on the Quay in Dunkirk, for their daily bread, whose grandfathers were possessed of very pretty properties."

France, in its *sporting* character, is making rapid strides. Independently of the love of hunting, which is greatly on the increase, there are now twenty-two places in France at which race meetings take place, and the racing calender gives the names of upwards of two hundred proprietors of race-horses. And although, as yet, there are no regular betting men, as with us, coming under the denomination of "Legs," heavy sums are laid out amongst the amateurs. At the first Chantilly meeting which I attended, for example, as much as 12,000*l.* was staked *on one race*; and at that of a subsequent year, so much money was betted on what is called the French Derby (the Jockey Club Stakes), and two or three other races, that I was requested by the stewards to make a point of attending the meeting, it being their wish that some perfectly disinterested person should officiate as judge of the races. It was an excellent meeting as regarded sport, although the gaiety of it was eclipsed by an *émeute* which broke out in Paris a few days previously.

There are at this time fox-hounds established at Boulogne and St. Omer, as well as in other parts of France; but from the nature of the country, I am by no means sanguine as to the success of fox-hunting in France. Stag-hunting, as practised in England, should be the object of Frenchmen, as far as hounds are concerned.

Unless as a matter of exercise, and consequently health, Englishmen had better abandon all ideas of sporting, when they reside in this part of France. From the combined circumstances of the sale of game being effected at nearly all periods of the year, and the system of cutting corn so close to the ground as to leave scarcely any stubble, partridges are greatly thinned before the *chasse* opens by law, and hares are equally rare. Woodcocks do not remain above a day or two before they seek a more woodland country than this is, and although there are snipes in the marshes, the following them is difficult, and anything but conducive to health.

I have not seen one down-charge pointer or setter in France. The French do not appear to be particular in the breaking-in of their dogs, so as to have them under proper command, although they have several good sorts for game. They are all taught to "fetch and carry," which is necessary in snipe-shooting.

French foxes are soon killed by hounds, by reason, it is said, of their living much on moles, which so abound in France. A noted fox-taker, called *Badger Joe*, brought a cargo of live foxes to Calais, to embark for England, and he informed me that he has occasionally found as many as thirty moles in one fox-earth, and always more or less in those which contain cubs.

CHAPTER III.

Humanity to animals in France—Criminal laws—Laws for debt—French servants—Anecdotes of them—French system of agriculture—A French farm-house—Moles—Cultivation of beet-root—French breed of cows and horses—Superiority of their horses for slow work—On summering cattle—French breed of pigs—Experimental farm—Payment of labourers—French and Belgian butter—French cream—Travelling in France and Belgium—Posting — Postillions — French couriers—Their extraordinary endurance of fatigue—Anecdotes of Hughes Ball and Lord Howden.

In their treatment of animals the French people read us a lesson. They not only use them kindly when arrived at maturity, but they absolutely pet them when young, which accounts for their extreme docility. This is especially the case with horses. A short time back I put a four year old horse into single harness, and although aware that he had never known a collar (having purchased him at two years old), so confident was I that he would go quietly, that I put two little children behind him at the first trial. Fat cattle are also seen being *led* to the slaughter-house, and in no instance, save one, have I seen them offer the smallest resistance. In the summer time, too, an act of humanity is performed towards milch cows, their udders being drawn *three times a day*. This also is a preventive of disease, arising from the extreme distention of the udders of cows milked only twice a day, during the months when the grass is at its best.

Then, how pleasing it is to see the sheep following their shepherd, with crosier in hand, after the manner of the patriarchs of old, instead of their being hunted before him by dogs, as they are in our country. Their dogs, however, exhibit wonderful sagacity in tending the flocks by day; and so constantly are they at work, in preventing their trespassing on land not intended for them to feed upon, that the average of their services does not exceed two years. No dog works half so hard; and all those persons who know what dogs can do, and what they cannot do with impunity, will not be surprised to hear that such is the case.

From what I have seen and read of the criminal laws of France, I highly approve of them. They are made for the people, whereas most of those in our country are made for the lawyers. The French look to the protection of society as the end; the English have allowed the protection of society to become only a pretence, and the profit of the "profession" to become the substantial object. In France, the detection of the criminal is the chief object, and, if found guilty, punishment surely follows. They know nothing of the plausible claptrap of "tempering justice with mercy." They consider that the mercy which sets aside real justice is treason to society, and the worst injury to the common safety. On my expressing my surprise to a Frenchman at the apparently careless conduct of shopkeepers, in leaving their shops unprotected, he made me this answer: "If your servant was to be detected in stealing an old pair of shoes he would be certain to be sent to the galleys." To appearance this is severity; in the end it is mercy.

In one instance, however, I have, as an Englishman, a right to offer an observation on what I consider a hardship respecting the laws of France. As regards imprisonment for debt, there is one law for a Frenchman, and another for an Englishman. For example—an Englishman is subject to two years' imprisonment for a debt not exceeding twenty pounds; and to five, for any sum beyond that amount. Since I have resided in the country, one (a female) has paid the extreme penalty, in person, in Calais jail; and several others the minor one. And, after all, see the folly of this proceeding! Twenty shillings per month being the sum paid by the detaining creditor as alimony, it follows, that the detention of the female prisoner alluded to cost her creditor sixty pounds. The French are extremely lenient towards each other, as regards imprisonment for debt, although they have the power of arrest on commercial bills, with which great part of their business is carried on, and on other business transactions. During the progress of the bill for the abolishing imprisonment for debt (so called, at least) in our House of Commons, I ascertained the state of the prisons of Calais, Boulogne, St. Omer, and Dunkirk, during two years, and the following was the result, in a population—including the intermediate rural districts—of 150,000 souls. First year, *one* in St. Omer, a fraudulent female bankrupt—all the others blank! Second year, *one* in Dunkirk—all the others blank! I sent the result to Sir John, now Lord Campbell, with my name and address, authorizing him to make use of it in the House, if he thought proper, and I confess I was surprised at his not having reverted to so striking a fact.

In the *code pénal* of France, which has the reputation of being as perfect as the science of laws will admit, there are some striking peculiarities. For example: In cases of burglary, the following circumstances must all concur in the same fact, to make the punishment death. First, the robbery must be committed in the night. Secondly, there must be more than one robber. Thirdly, one of the party must be armed. Fourthly, there must be fraction; and fifthly, violence, or threats to use arms. According as there are more or less of these circumstances, the imprisonment is more or less severe, and a natural consequence of this is, a forbearance to use violence; and although robberies of this nature are very seldom heard of, yet, in five thousand cases, there would not be one case of murder.

I should have entered on the occupation of land in France had it not been that I feared I should never be able to manage French servants. The French spoil their servants in two ways. First, in *over-indulgence*, by letting them run about the country to *fêtes*, dancing, and so forth; secondly, by admitting them to too great an equality with themselves. Were the entire nation to be searched, a more complete specimen of a French servant than my own gardener could not be found. He has been upwards of nine years with me, but without my being yet able to call myself his master. The fact is, he thinks that he himself knows everything, and that I am little better than a fool. Only fancy his teaching me how to ride! But such is the fact; he has frequently approached me when mounting my horse, to shew me how my foot should be placed in the stirrup, and how I should sit.

But tiresome, and too often provoking, as is the vanity and folly of this Frenchman, he possesses qualities that counterbalance them. He is strictly honest; much attached to me and to my family; and, best of all qualities in a servant, he never sees a difficulty. The words "*ce n'est rien*—'tis nothing," are ever in his mouth, when any thing untoward may chance to fall out, and a remedy in his mind is ever at his hand.

On our first meeting in the morning, it

is, "*Bon jour, Monsieur*," and the nightcap half-drawn from his head. Neither Monsieur nor the nightcap are afterwards resorted to throughout the day; it is either *oui*, or *non*, as occasion may require, and very often, "*non, non, jamais comme ça en France*"—to an explicit order to do something according with my ideas of how that something should be done!

The intercourse with my countrymen, I have reason to believe, has worked but little change in the general character of French servants. To us English they are the same uncouth, self-willed, unmanageable animals that they have ever been. I shall never forget the first specimen I had of their gad-about propensity, and their determination to indulge it. A friend of mine, being a catholic, and at home in the French language, thought he could manage French servants, and, although as fidgety as any old maid ever was in the economy of his house, he hired a brace of the female gender to attend upon himself and his wife, in lodgings, previously to their commencing housekeeping. Well! about the third Sunday after this experiment was made, he asked me to dine with him, when a scene occurred truly characteristic of French female servants. Just as we were drinking the first glass of claret after our cheese, in walked the waiting-maid, with a tray of tea-things in one hand, which she popped down on the dinner-table, and a kettle of water in the other, which she popped by the side of the fire.

"What are you about?" asked mine host.

"I am going out," said the waiting-maid.

"But you can't go this evening," replied he.

"Oh! yes, I must," resumed the girl.

"But you shall not!" exclaimed the one.

"I must," said the other.

"And where are you going?" demanded the master.

"To a dance," answered the servant.

"Then the devil go with you!" exclaimed the said *master!* and to the dance did the damsel go, and to the dance would she have gone in spite of all the masters and mistresses in the world.

On another occasion, I was dining with the same friend in his house, on a Friday evening, when, as we were sitting over our wine, in walked a female servant with some dirty rags in her hand, and commenced cleaning the brass lock of the door.

My friend ordered her to desist, and she made her exit; but in ten minutes or less, she returned, and once more began scrubbing the lock. On her master asking why she did what she was then doing at that hour of the day, she replied, she generally cleaned the locks on Saturdays, but as the morrow was a *fête*, she must do it then.

But now for the other side of the question. A friend of mine who occupies a château near Boulogne, has French servants—two maids and a man. Myself and my family have twice been domiciled in this château during Boulogne races; and what did we remark touching the conduct of those servants? We retired to our beds every night leaving wine, brandy, tea, sugar, cakes, sweetmeats, fruits, all exposed to the, perhaps, longing eyes of these servants, but neither a drop of the liquids nor a pennyweight of the eatables would be touched! Would this have been the case with English servants of a certain grade? I can only answer—not with any that I ever have been the master of.

The farmers in this country appear to have much more confidence in their servants than ours have in theirs. Exclusively of my almost daily observance of the operations going on in a large open field of some hundred acres, immediately in the rear of my house, in my rides and walks I see a great deal of those generally going on in this part of France. I observe very few masters' eyes overlooking ploughmen or labourers—no, not even in harvest-time. It is true, their wages are low; but I think they give their employers the pennyworth for the penny, and they appear to be a contented race. As to their general deportment, there is none of that "*asperitas agrestis, et inconcinna*"—that clownish rusticity—which prevails in the English of this class, and which has greatly increased within the last thirty years, despite of the schoolmaster abroad.

In every part of France that I have passed through, agriculture has appeared to me to be in a most defective state. Barring the immediate neighbourhood of towns, every acre of land (that is, of what we call outfield) between Calais and Paris might be made to produce double what it now produces, under a different mode of culture. I make this assertion on the grounds of what I have myself seen and heard from undoubted authority. Previous to the culture of turnips, and its results—namely, folding of sheep, and the abolition of naked fallow by wheat on the clover lay—thousands of acres of land in England (the Holkham estate, in Norfolk, as one instance) have been trebled in value to their owners, and made proportionably profitable to their occupiers.

There are, however, it seems, three reasons why this beautiful system of agriculture—the four-shift course, as it is called, and to which the generality of the land I allude to in France is admirably adapted—cannot be practised in this country. First, the fear of exposing flocks of sheep to the danger of being devoured by wolves in the night; secondly, the want of enclosures, and the custom of throwing all arable lands open after harvest; and, lastly, the inadequacy of French farmers' means to have large flocks of sheep. How far these obstacles are insurmountable, it is not in my power to determine; but I am convinced of the truth of what I have asserted, that the land in question is only half productive. Indeed, looking at the stock upon it, and the distance of so much of it from the homestead, it is surprising that it produces what it does. Then the system of harvesting both hay and corn is dilatory and slovenly in the extreme; so much so, that a lock of good hay, and a really bright sample of corn, is a rarity in these parts, unless under the most favourable circumstances as to weather.* As to hay, indeed, it is for the most part left out in the meadows until it cannot fail to be more or less injured by weather, much of it remaining in small cocks for more than two months. Again, the total neglect of extirpating weeds from land mown for hay is one cause of its being but seldom of first-rate quality. But Frenchmen do not think it requisite for horses to eat *good* hay; they seem to think more of good straw as an article of rack food.

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* The following calculation is from authority. The produce of a given quantity of wheat is,—From

A French farm-house is, generally speaking, a very comfortless affair; neither is

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grain slightly germinated, forty kilogrammes of flour and pollard, and seventeen of bran; greatly germinated, thirty-six kilogrammes of flour and pollard, and seventeen of bran; well harvested, fifty-eight kilogrammes of flour and pollard, and only eleven of bran! Were French farmers, who leave their wheat on the ground, *not shocked*, or anywise secured from weather, aware of the above facts, they would be more careful than they are. Wheat should be shocked on the day on which it is cut down. Again, germinated wheat is unfit for seed, and to the use of it is many a failing crop to be attributed. If slightly germinated, it does not rise but in proportion of one-half of the seed employed; if strongly germinated, in that of one-third.

there anything approaching to tidiness or neatness about their premises. Their rick-yards are disgusting to an English agricultural eye; and from the awkward form of the ricks, much damage must be caused by birds, by the great surface of outsides, and by weather.

I once saw a French farmer's family at dinner, and this was the economy of the table: There was one dish of soup and bouillie on the middle of the table, in which they all dipped their spoons, so that he who had the best swallow got the best share.

I have seen much good ploughing in France, and such as I did not expect to see, from the apparent rudeness and inefficiency of the implements. And French farmers are awake to the fact that there is a season for ploughing land, as well as for sowing grain. They are aware of the fact, that at no time or season should the plough be at work, unless the earth falls from the mould-board in a mellow, pulverized state; if it cuts its way through, leaving the furrow entire and shining, the men and horses had better be otherwise employed. I now speak of working fallows in the spring. In ploughing lays in the autumn, the furrows will be turned entire, being bound together by the undecayed fibres of the previous crop, and yet be in good order for the perfect operation of the harrows. Four horses are never seen in a plough in France, three being the usual number; and on the two foregoing points, as well as on making two yokings in a day, it would be well if English farmers would take a leaf out of her book.

To an English eye, the prodigious quantity of moles (in grass land especially) in France is somewhat astounding. It is insisted upon here, that by having their risings bush-harrowed in the spring, a dressing for the land is afforded, and therefore they are suffered to live and rise, much to the satisfaction of the foxes, whose food they are, and to the ready access to which is attributed the want of wind in French foxes, when pursued by hounds. A Scotch bailiff, who lived some years with me in Hampshire, and myself, were at issue as regards moles. He was averse to having them destroyed, and used the argument made use of here; but I insisted on it, that, as my land was tender, and the cattle heavy, injury was done by them in wet seasons, by rendering the land hollow. Perhaps much may be said on both sides, and the point is worth consideration; but, be it remembered, moles are destructive to certain kinds of drainage, and perhaps injurious to all.

The cultivation of beet-root has spread greatly in this part of France since I have known it; and a good deal has been said and written about the cultivation of it in England, for making sugar. Let me remind my countrymen, that it is not considered a safe speculation here. It sometimes happens that the root contains so little of saccharine matter, as to be manufactured at a loss. Two large manufactories in my parish stopped two years ago, and the working of them has not been renewed. Potatoes, not generally eaten here thirty years back, are now most extensively grown, and pay well for culture.

The breed of cows, in all parts of France which I have visited, is much in want of improvement. They are small, the consequence of being badly kept when young, and stand much in need of a cross of one of our short-horned breeds, to give them size, and aptitude to make flesh, as well as to increase their milk. During a recent visit to Count Duval de Beaulieu, in Belgium, the most extensive breeder of cattle and horses in that kingdom—and I may be allowed to say so, when I state that he has upwards of three hundred horses—I endeavoured to persuade him to send to Durham or Herefordshire for a bull, by which, from the similarity of points in his breed of cows (originally Flemish) he would gain a thousand pounds the first year. I proved it to him on my own experience. When on my Yorkshire tour, I purchased a well-bred Durham bull. At my sale, yearling calves, his produce, averaged 13*l.* 6*s.*, whereas had they been the produce of a bull of the country, they would not have fetched 5*l.*

French horses, for all *slow* work, are superior to those of England, and for all purposes of agriculture,—from their combined strength and activity, as well as their general freedom from diseases and lameness, in comparison with those of my own country. The last-named advantages I attribute to two causes: First, to the alterative nature of their food, a great part of which consists of wheaten straw and bran; secondly, to the French system of shoeing, which, clumsy and unsightly as it appears to be to an English eye, is less injurious to the foot than that practised in England.

The extreme docility of French horses is also a remarkable feature in their history; and to it, and not to the skill of their drivers, or strength and soundness of their harness, is the safety of all travellers in French Diligences to be attributed.

It is evident that, to a certain extent, the national passion of the French nation for war and conquest is yielding to a predilection for agriculture, manufactures, and commerce. I have not been able to see any of their experimental farms, on account of their distance, but I have reason to believe that, on one material point, we might derive a good lesson from French agriculturists—I allude to the use of in-door food, or the soiling of cattle and sheep. For example: On one of these farms, of five hundred acres, near Papillon, one thousand sheep, one hundred and fourteen head of cattle, and twenty-two horses, are kept, throughout the height of the summer months, on ninety acres of what is called green food, great part of which, no doubt, afford three, if not four cuttings. There is every reason to believe that, thanks to Lord Western, the injurious system pursued by the English and the Scotch agriculturist, in not summering nearly all his stock in the house, and also in suffering his sheep to be exposed to the dreadful vicissitudes and rigours of an English or Scotch winter, will be continued no longer.

Within the short period of my residence in this country I can observe an increasing amelioration in the cattle, and to a still greater degree in the pigs, which, from being crossed with the English breed, are every year losing that nondescript, greyhound-like form, which marks the indigenous French hog. Still I must observe—and I speak from considerable experience on this head—that, despite of his ungainly form, the indigenous French pig is far from an unprofitable animal, inasmuch as he will live and grow upon a little, and acquires flesh rapidly when put up to feed on food of a nourishing quality.

But to revert for a moment to the experimental farm at Papillon. The labourer on that farm is thus remunerated: He has 160 francs (about 6*l.* 8*s.*) per annum, in cash; forty gallons of oil; one hundred and sixty gallons of wine; twenty-two bushels of wheat; a cottage, and ground for his haricots, &c.

I have already alluded to the humane treatment of sheep by French shepherds, who thus induce their flocks to follow them to and from pasture, instead of driving and alarming them by dogs, as we do in England. I have been informed how this is effected. The shepherd brings up two or three lambs by hand, which, by following him ever afterwards when called, cause the whole flock to do the same. His call upon these *protégés* naturally induces the flock to move when they hear his voice ; and to persons to whom such scenes of rural imagery are not devoid of interest, it is a very gratifying sight. It is classical, as well. Statius, in his "Thebaïd," compares the parental care and military vigilance of the Grecian general, Eteocles, to a shepherd *leading out* his sheep from their fold ; and Homer illustrates the joy which Æneas displays on viewing the discipline of his troops, by that of a shepherd, on seeing his flock in good plight, as he *leads* them to water.

It has appeared to me that the worst article of eating brought to Calais market is butter. I have provided against this imperfection by having mine from Belgium, and it is of the very first quality. And another recommendation is due to it. At the end of a fortnight it is as sweet and as well flavoured as on the day of its arrival; which I account for by the total absence of salt in the making of it. All persons are aware that a sufficient quantity of salt will preserve butter for many months, in which case it comes under the denomination of "salt butter;" but it is not every one who is aware that a small quantity of salt hastens putrefaction in all animal matter.

To outward appearance, French farmers' wives are cleanly with their milk utensils, such as churns, pails, &c.—that is to say, they are everlastingly cleaning their outward sides; but, from the flavour of their butter, I doubt their paying sufficient attention to the scalding of the inward sides of them. And as for French cream, I never touch that which I do not know is skimmed, as it is in my own house, from milk purchased fresh from the cow. For how, reader, do you think cream is separated—or skimmed, as we say—from the milk in France? Why, by the fingers of the skimmer—be the said fingers clean or unclean.

I can use no other epithets than *abomin-*

able and *disgusting*, to travelling both in France and Belgium. I recently denied myself the pleasure of my annual visit to Count Duval, in Belgium, to celebrate the *fête* of St. Hubert, the patron of the Belgic chase, when he has a party of upwards of thirty of the *élite* of Belgium and other countries in his house—feeling something approaching to a horror of the journey, although not more than about a hundred and thirty miles. But, reader, you shall hear how it is performed. To Dunkirk, twenty-four miles—five hours. Stop there two. *All the night* going to Lille—fifty miles. Stop there an hour *in a coach-office.* Then a change from a five to a three horse diligence, which, when I once was condemned to a seat in it, weighed eight tons on the weigh-bridge, having thirty-four passengers! Well, this "drags its slow length along" until you can see before you the town at which you are to breakfast, (at about ten A.M.,) distant *une petite lieue*—say two miles English. But when will you arrive there? Why, not until every box and trunk and pack, which this huge machine carries, has been opened and examined by the custom-house officers on entering the Belgic frontier.

In fact, French travelling, which is much on a par with that in most parts of the continent of Europe, is at least a hundred years behind that in my own country; and so will it continue to the end of time. When Prince Albert was to arrive in Calais, dinner was ordered for him at eight o'clock, nine hours being allowed for his trip from Ostend, a distance of only fifty-four miles! Two years ago I was nine hours, *en route*, from Ostend to Dunkirk, a distance of only thirty-five miles! And at that period, and until within a very short time ago, there was no diligence at all running between those great towns—second, perhaps, only to the capitals of their countries! There was, indeed, a dilapidated cabriolet on the ground, drawn by two tottering horses; but unless you wished to be dry-smoked, after the manner of bacon, you would not have submitted your person to such an experiment as to make it one of six smock-frocked Dutchmen, all with pipes in their mouths, filled with Belgic tobacco.

Posting in France is a fair subject for the pencil of the caricaturist. It is a great hardship upon the travelling public that it is not better conducted; and the mischief arises merely from conceit and prejudice. There is not a more self-approving mortal on the face of the earth, than a French postillion, at the same time that he is a perfect nondescript, both in person and in action. From the vile form of his saddle, and the extreme length of his stirrups, his seat on his horse is most distressing to the animal who carries him; and, from the little assistance he can give him by the hand and leg, which postboys in England have the power to give, he is afraid to go down a hill at a pace much beyond a walk. Thus no advantage can be taken of falling ground; and as French post-horses are unable, from their want of better breeding and condition, to trot up hills, six miles an hour is the average speed of French posting.

But the French postillion, nondescript as he may be, is civil and obliging in his manners, and does not think the less of himself for the privileges he enjoys. In the first place, he is exempt from the conscription; in the next, he is entitled to a pension from the government after a certain period of service, and sooner if disabled from an accident on the road, provided he be equipped at the time in the orthodox jack-boot—in itself, at once, an antidote to speed. At the rate at which our postboys drive, they would be knocked to pieces in a very few years, were they to ride in the awkward style of the French postillion. But, as Lord Jersey says, " an English postboy is a *sui-generis* sort of an animal ;" there is nothing like him in all the world—take him for his horsemanship, his nerve, his style of dress, his cleanliness of person, his uniform civility, and his hardiness of frame and constitution, which renders him proverbial for long life, despite of the hardships he so often encounters, and the vile stuff in the shape of liquor that finds its way down his throat. As I have before said, who ever heard of a bilious postboy? His calling is an antidote against any obstruction of the liver; and some great man, on seeing the dissection of the human frame, is said to have exclaimed, "He was sure every man was intended for a postillion."

The awkwardness of the lower orders of the French people in all their proceedings with horses, is something quite extraordinary, and it is only from the docility of the animals that they can obtain the command over them which they do. Fancy, guiding a powerful, headstrong horse with a single cord, which is almost invariably the only means of guidance resorted to here; and, strange to say, in case there are two cords or reins to a horse's bit, they are purposely clubbed together before they reach the driver's hand! Then, as to arranging the coupling-reins of horses working in double harness, to suit their tempers and strength, so minutely attended to in our country, nothing of the kind is thought of. I need not say that such negligence is the cause of very many accidents, and accounts for the recent statement in Galignani's paper, that in the course of three years there were nine hundred and fifty-two persons injured in the streets of Paris, by being driven over by public carriages, twenty-eight of whom were killed. In 1837, the number driven over was three hundred and sixty-one; and the editor imputes this wholesale destruction of life and limb to the imprudence of the drivers. Imprudent they may be, but ignorance as to how horses should be put into harness, so as to have them under immediate command, is the great cause; and that ignorance must remain amongst a class of people, who, thinking themselves perfect, refuse to be taught.

There are certain charms in English travelling which it is vain to look for on the Continent. First, the comfort of the inns; secondly, the reception on arrival at them.

From the host and hostess, to the very boots himself, all give you welcome; you are ushered into a comfortable room, well warmed by fire in the winter, and well ventilated in the summer; whereas on the Continent no such comfort awaits the traveller. He is either shewn into a large comfortless apartment, neither well ventilated nor warm, or into the *table d'hôte* room, which, so far from being well ventilated, is redolent of every savour, from an *étuvée* of onions, to stale fish; and neither host nor hostess appear to bid him welcome. But this bidding of welcome is rather on the decline in England—the result of modern refinement, which cannot stoop so low. "I hope you found your bed comfortable, and rested well," was the usual morning salutation of either host or hostess, twenty years back; and they were words not thrown away.

A French courier must be seen, to be within the comprehension of an Englishman's mind. I will, however, endeavour to convey something like an idea of him.

In the first place, as to his horse. No

butcher in England is ever seen on so miserable-looking an animal; and, whether formed by nature for it or not (and to do it as it should be done, and with ease to himself or rider, nature *must* be consulted, inasmuch as with straight hind-legged horses, the canter is an outrage on their physical powers), the canter must be his pace, to enable his rider, who would not be seen rising in his stirrups to his trot on any consideration whatever, to endure a long journey. Then a huge collar of bells round his neck, responding to the up-and-down, jarring action of the unhappy nag, with a saddle of at least thirty pounds weight, and a bridle of equally ancient date, complete this part of the picture.

Next, of the rider. On his head—on the very top of it, and looking as if a puff of wind would dislodge it—is stuck a cap, *à la militaire*, encircled with a handsome gilt band. On the upper part of his body is a tight-fitting blue jacket, embroidered down the back *à la militaire*, whilst his nether parts are cased in very thick, very tight, yellow or green leather breeches, and of course, jack-boots, with spurs of some inches of neck. Then away he goes, sitting back in his saddle, flourishing his whip over his head with no small degree of skill, the smacking of which, together with the jingling of the bells, produces a musical medley of no common order. But there is one peculiarity in his dress, not yet noticed, and the most remarkable of all. From under his jack-boots, and drawn for about a quarter of a yard and upwards over his leathers, appear the tops of a pair of coarse worsted stockings. Now what is the object here? I am unable to say, further than that it may be either to save irritation from the hard jack-boot, and still harder saddle, or by the rough surface of the stockings to obtain a closer seat.

Unsightly as is the appearance of this description of persons to an English eye, and unprepared as they appear to be to withstand the effects of bad weather, their endurance of fatigue in their journeys is far beyond what might be expected—in numerous cases, indeed, surprising. For example, it has been no unusual occurrence for one of Mr. Rothschild's couriers to come from Paris to Calais, and return to Paris almost immediately on his arrival at the former place; generally performing the distance, 170 miles, in from eighteen to twenty hours. There are couriers now in Calais, who have frequently ridden to Rome, Naples, Madrid, and places equally distant.

CHAPTER IV.

Trade between Calais and London—Facilities of residence at Calais—Surrounding country—Field of the Cloth of Gold—Relics of the Huguenots—Want of energy in the French—Anecdotes of the English in France—The church of Nôtre Dame—Smuggling in Calais—Liberality of the Calais authorities—Calais fair—Extraordinary exhibition—English antiquities at Calais — Construction of French houses—Ventilation—French mortar and bricks.

Few persons, perhaps, on the other side the water, are aware of the extent of trade carried on between Calais and London, and other parts of England. In 1838, the amount of tonnage of English vessels which entered the port, *not* including mail-packets, or what are called passenger steam-boats, amounted to 28,170 tons. It must be admitted, that the recent permission to export English coals, has, to a certain extent, swelled this aggregate amount; but, twenty years back, who would have contemplated such an interchange of commerce in one small French port?

A word more touching the said port. It has been in contemplation with our post-office to remove the mails to some other French port. I think the advisers of that measure would rue the day it was put into practice, on account of the great comparative facility of entrance, in bad weather, which the port of Calais enjoys over that of Boulogne.

I have already observed that, from its locality, to such of the English as wish to reside in France, and are content or compelled to live without the great and active pleasures of life, there is no place in the kingdom to be compared with Calais. But what say the English who land at Calais, and feel inclined to tarry there, or in its neighbourhood? Why, they naturally first of all ask, "*Where are we to live?* We can find no house equal to afford us the conveniences we require. But is it not extraordinary," they as naturally resume, " that where so many opportunities present themselves—sound and dry commons, for example, which, if planted and improved, would form excellent sites for the purpose —neat and convenient houses, after our villa or cottage-*orné* fashion, are not erected, inasmuch as they would instantly find English tenants?"

All this is true. I have already spoken of the acknowledged salubrity of the air here (there is a noble family, indeed, now in Calais for the sole advantage of it), and it is easily accounted for. In all air there is more or less of that principle which is essential to life and health; but the air which, as is the case here, passes over an immense tract of ocean, is, of all others, the purest; better calculated, generally, for the purposes of breathing in weakly persons, at all seasons of the year; and from being refrigerated, or cooled, as well as purified, the bad effects of the sultry heats of the summer months are at once counteracted by it. Then, what a noble expanse of sands for the enjoyment of horse-exercise!

" Admitted," say all who make a trial of Calais as a residence; " but change of scene is essential, both in a physical and mental point of view; we get tired of the sands, day after day, and we want some object in view in our rides and drives. We want some pretty villages within our reach, in which there are clean little inns, to afford us the opportunity of making country excursions, and refreshing ourselves and our horses, as we do in our own country. We go to the Garden of Roses—a beautiful exhibition of at least fifteen hundred sorts of the queen of all flowers, but only visible during one month of the year; we drive to Pont Sanspareil, one of the wonders of the present age. But the wonder is, that at neither of these places, nor on Guines forest—classic ground—is there a house which a decent person can enter. Were such places of amusement and recreation within similar distances of any English town, the resort of strangers, there would be the sign of 'The Rose without the Thorn' at the first; the 'Hotel Sanspareil' at the second; and the 'Field of the Gold Cloth' at the third;—all clean little inns, at which refreshments might be had, or in which those brought by parties—*à la pic-nic*—might be enjoyed with some degree of comfort; which is out of the question as things are here." Neither is the little town of Guines unworthy of the notice of the inquisitive traveller, by reason of there being now extant some remains of the chapels or temples made use of by that class of Protestants called Huguenots, and which are to be seen on application to a gentleman residing in the town, who has preserved several of their relics for the inspection of the curious.

Perhaps I may scarcely obtain credit with many of my countrymen, when I state the following fact. Such things, they will say, cannot be in the year 1840.—There is, within less than three miles of Calais, a most abundant spring of water, of the purest quality. "Of course," my countrymen will say, "it supplies Calais with water." Such is not the case, although I should imagine four thousand pounds would accomplish the desirable object. Calais is supplied *by water-carts*, from a spring of very indifferent quality, a mile from the gates; but chiefly with rain-water, falling into tanks from the roofs of the houses, mixed, of course, with what filth there may be on the said roofs.

"And why are not the neighbouring marshes drained?" an Englishman would naturally inquire. The reason is, it would require the application of the steam-engine to effect this object; and here the want of energy and of spirit, and perhaps of money, in matters of this nature, is apparent.

The town of Calais, and also the Basse-ville, are at length lighted by gas, which was considered an extraordinary effort. There are two rival companies, one making their gas from coals, the other from resin. There is also a pretty museum in the town, with a fair collection of what are called curiosities.

There is one part of the municipal administration of France which I much admire, and well would it be for Englishmen if it existed in their country. I allude to the powers of mediation between creditor and debtor, given to the officer in authority, called the *juge de paix.* For example: a demand is made upon me which I do not admit the justice of. The person making it applies to the authorities to enforce it. I then receive a sort of civil invitation from the *juge de paix,* to present myself at his bureau, at an interval of several days, expressing "a hope that the matter in dispute may be arranged;" and it generally is arranged by the temper and justice of the mediator.

I could write a volume on the curious scenes and incidents that have taken place in Calais and its vicinity, since I have resided in France, but it might be too personal to please all parties. The relation of some of them would cause English tradesmen to express surprise that credit for five shillings should be given to an Englishman in France. The relation of the following anecdote, however, touching money matters—the *irritamentum malorum* in all countries—may be harmless, as the parties are dead and gone.

Some few years since, a General Stack, a fine old soldier from the Emerald Isle, lived and died at an hotel in Calais, where his establishment consisted of a servant and two horses. He was what we call a fine-looking old fellow, six feet two inches high, and as upright and stiff as if he had swallowed two kitchen pokers. Meeting a very diminutive person of his own sex one day in the street, with whom he had a very slight acquaintance, he was thus coolly addressed by him:

"General," said he, "I am very hard up; will you lend me five pounds for five days?"

"My dear fellow," replied the general, with the native drollery of his country, and looking down on his customer, "do you think that any man who has five pounds to lend, would remain five days in Calais?"

On another occasion, a short time before his death, he was thus addressed by Mr. Roberts, proprietor of the hotel at which he sojourned :—" General," said he, " I have a letter this morning from a Mr. —— of Cork, inquiring after your health."

" Then," said the general, " you may tell him I *am dying*, but that the devil a tester will there be for him."

But I must relate another queer trick played off at Calais. An Englishman ordered dinner at an hotel for ten. It was to consist entirely of *game*, and sixteen bottles of champagne were considered necessary to wash it down. " All went off," as the papers say, very well; but towards midnight it was hinted to the unfortunate host that his customer " went off" also; and such was the case. He had his permit in his pocket all ready for a start, and as the packet sailed for England just in the nick of time, he stepped on board, and has not since been heard of.

No person should pass through Calais without seeing the church, dedicated, of course, to Our Lady, as the term *Nôtre Dame* implies. Sterne called it "more fine than handsome," but no one can deny its being a grand and appropriate edifice. The grand altar, fifty feet high, cost 20,000 livres—a great sum in those days; and if sold piecemeal at the present time, it would produce a hundred and fifty thousand pounds of our money.

Fault is found by English travellers—nor do I believe the French themselves admire them—with the proceedings of the Calais custom-house; but when I say that it has been calculated that smuggled goods to the average amount of 700*l.* were for many years weekly introduced into this part of the country—Calais and its neighbourhood—we cannot wonder at their looking sharp. It certainly is not pleasant or congenial to English feeling to be followed, immediately on landing in France, by a man with a sword on his thigh, after the manner of a refractory culprit; but as nothing can be done here without the cocked-hat and sword, we, who are used to it, think nothing of it! Then the searching the person on all occasions, which is not the case on our side the water—never, indeed, unless suspicion attaches—is not much relished; but the pea-jackets and large cloaks of the men, and the flounces and bustles of the women of the present day, afford such aids to smuggling, that one can scarcely marvel at a wish being expressed just to see or *feel* whether all is right or wrong. To English residents, who are known and not suspected, much indulgence is shewn at the Custom-house—at least I can speak to my own case. Not a fortnight passes that I have not a parcel from London, which is sent to me unopened.

During the last week in January and the first in February, the half-yearly fair takes place in the town of Calais. It is an occasion looked forward to by the townspeople and inhabitants of the surrounding country, as they are enabled to supply themselves with commodities of all kinds at a cheaper rate than in the ordinary course of business.

Many of the town-traders or shopkeepers have stalls in the booths, and they avail themselves of the opportunity to get rid of their old stock of goods. As is usual in all countries, the time of the fair attracts all the wandering minstrels and itinerant actors within twenty leagues of the place; and the temporary wooden theatres are filled to excess every night of the fortnight's duration of the fair.

Among the shows or exhibitions, there is generally one more particularly patronised, which professes to give a true and faithful representation of the awful and mysterious incidents of the Redeemer's passion! Each sacred emblem of that gracious dispensation is shewn bodily and to the life; and, to judge by the demeanour of the spectators, to their edification. The scene is regarded with reverence and in silence, except the passage where the cock crows thrice, on Peter denying his master. At this point of the exhibition, some English spectators of the lower order generally break out into a loud laugh; but the only notice taken by the French by-standers of this flagrant breach of decency, is a commiserating shrug of the shoulders, and a slight elevation of the eyebrows, which, in the person of a Frenchman, on occasions like this, express more than words have the power to do.

This exhibition is the lineal descendant of the ancient *Mysteries* and *Moralities,* which preceded the establishment of the modern theatre as at present existing. Six hundred years ago, as now, the same representation took place *upon the same spot and in the same manner.* The only difference is that of *time;* and also that, whereas, on the present occasion, a sentry of a regiment of the French line is on duty at the door; in the remote period alluded to, an English yeoman, in steel headpiece and breastplate, shivered in the north-easterly breeze, in the performance of the same duty. The clergy of France encourage such representations, as they familiarize the mind to the contemplation of holy subjects; and they have no fear that the familiar manner in which they are represented, should induce an irreverent appreciation of them by the people. Besides, the spectators of this country, and of this town especially, are accustomed to the show; it is connected with the historical traditions of the place; and this *Mystery* of the Passion,—with its personification of the Lord's Supper, the betrayal, the arraignment, the crown of thorns, the denial by St. Peter, the cock crowing, the crucifixion, and the concomitant miracles of the earthquake and darkness,—is, I am bold to say, looked upon by the simple-minded artisans and country people with the same respect as the more imposing ritual which is annually celebrated on Good Friday, under the canopied and gilded roof of the Catholic cathedral.

There is, probably, no place on the Continent which might present a more interesting study to the English antiquarian than the town of Calais, or one out of which more legends of the English domination in France may be collected. The beautiful *Beffroi*, or watch-tower, of the Hotel de

Ville, is principally of English erection; the Cour de Guise was formerly the English mint; the splendid church was considerably repaired by the English; the head of the heroic Eustache de Saint Pierre stands over the entrance-door to the Town Hall, with a rope round his neck, to commemorate his act of self-devotion, which Rome itself, in her days of virtuous simplicity, may be said never to have surpassed. In fact, a curious and careful antiquarian might observe relics of our country's supremacy in every street of this old town.

That there are comfortable and weather-tight houses in France, both public and private, cannot be denied by the most fastidious judges of comfort; but that nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand throughout the country, are neither comfortable nor weather-tight, is a fact equally indisputable. There is one feature in the construction of them, indeed, which militates against comfort, and that is, the absurd practice of making windows on each side of the rooms where the houses are single; so that, independently of the inconvenience of what is called a cross-light, very annoying to the eyesight, and causing a constant draught of cold air in the winter, there is little respite from the piercing rays of the sun in the summer solstice. But in double houses the windows will rarely resist a storm of beating rain; and as to being anything like air-tight, that is not to be expected from their construction and materials. Then the glass is so thin that a friend of mine residing here declares *the wind finds its way through it.* There is one security, however, against beating rains and driving snow in French houses, which is worthy of imitation in all exposed situations, and that is, the open-barred, *outside* shutters to all the *upper* windows. Neither are they merely a security against bad weather; they contribute to the safety of the inmates, and would be desirable safeguards to all low houses in England, situated apart from others, and consequently less secure.

Ventilation is not enough attended to in French houses. Step into the inner apartment of a French shopkeeper, and you are at once convinced of the truth of Mrs. Hamilton's remark, in her amusing tale of the "Cottagers of Glenburnie," that *air* is a luxury only understood by the better orders. Thus she makes the old Scotch dame remark with satisfaction, that the air can never "have *won* into her sleeping-apartment." Did people, however, put the proper value on ventilation of apartments as regards health, it would be more attended to than it is.

In my own experience, I can speak to the good effects of ventilation. I have been nearly forty years a housekeeper, without ever having had anything like a malignant disease in my house. I attribute this blessing, in great part, to a rigid observance of my orders, that bedroom windows (others of course) should be left open the greater part of the day, in all seasons of the year; that no bed should be made for at least three hours after it has been occupied; and that previously to its being made, all the clothes belonging to it shall be exposed, *separately*, to the air.

There is one essential in the construction of French houses, of which I cannot speak too highly, and that is, their mortar. It appears almost to equal in hardness the similar preparation of lime and sand, mixed with water, for which the Romans were so celebrated, and which, for its powers of cement and its durability, we have not been able to equal by our system of admixture. Certainly the French mortar may justly be called "cement;" and it is well that it can boast of this superiority, inasmuch as French bricks are very inferior to ours, from want of skill and care in the burning of them.

French houses, however, generally speaking, are miserably defective in their plans, both for convenience and comfort; nor does there appear to be a desire to improve their structure. A heavy tax on windows and doors would be a blessing to the country—at all events as far as regards lumbago, rheumatism, catarrh, coughs, and sundry other pains and penalties which human flesh is heir to.

CHAPTER V.

Education in France and in England—Ill effects of too much knowledge on the lower orders—The French and English poor—Their food—French soup—A French peasant's supper—French and English cottages—The manufacturing poor of France—Mendicity in France—Marriage ceremony in France—Love of the French for their children—Bon-bons—Amusements and dress.

Perhaps at the present moment, a word or two on the education of the people of France may not be inappropriate, the subject being one which has become deeply interesting in England, and, to a certain extent, by reason of the difference of opinions entertained upon it, both as to the system and its effects. A multitude of good and right-thinking people assert, that, in the first place, we are attempting to employ the powers of the human mind, generally, on objects above their reach, and, as it were, to exalt human nature above its rank in the universe; and in the next, that the importance of religion is not sufficiently considered; thus tending to establish the notion, that a wise legislation is all that is necessary to make the world virtuous and happy; and that most of the evils which mankind labour under, are to be ascribed to the faults and imperfections of their political government. In fact, a large portion of the promoters of the education of the English community are accused of an indifference to extending their views beyond the present state of existence; and a still larger portion are unhappily convinced that, so far from crime having been checked by the present system, it has most alarmingly increased—a fact, I fear, too well established to be disputed.

This state of things does not appear to exist among the French. I find that the first step in what may be called village education in France is the preparation of the children for examination by the parish priest for confirmation, and afterwards, their being admitted to the Communion; and here are they seen at a very early age. Those who continue in the schools are instructed in the most useful parts of human learning, such as are fitting for their duties in after life.

The village children in France, from the lowness of the wages of their parents, must all help to boil the pot; the consequence of which is, that from the first of April to the first of November, there is only a slight attendance at the schools, by children beyond a certain age. And another evil arose, but for which a remedy, in part, has been produced within the last few years. It was found, that only a small proportion of the army could either write or read, having *forgotten* the effects of their elementary education in those respects, although other impressions might still remain. Regimental schools, therefore, are now formed. And I find that this oblivion of the acquirements of early days is too common among the labouring community — perhaps the natural consequence of their lot in life. But it is said the rising generation are not so likely to follow the example of their parents in that respect, owing to the greater number of cheap and amusing books now within their reach, but which were totally inaccessible to their parents.

I am by no means an approver of the present forced and over-refined system of English education; partly from what I see of its effects—or, rather, of its non-effects—in the wished-for end—and, partly, from what I have read of its results in other times. With the ancient Greeks, the corruption of their morals kept neck and neck with their polite accomplishments; indeed, Athens was the most dissolute of all the republics of Greece, in the time of Socrates, and in the time of Pericles, which was that of Aristophanes, Demosthenes, and Euripides! The like may be said of the Augustan age, after the introduction of the Grecian philosophy into Italy; and I might refer to that of Leo X. and Louis XIV. in

France, as well as to that of the second Charles in England. And what has been the effect of the sort of bastard philosophy at present so widely spreading in Great Britain? Why, as Aristophanes exhibits in the play of "The Clouds," such inferences are drawn from it as have, to a certain extent, annihilated subordination, and given colour to every species of dishonesty and fraud. In short, the miscreant introduced by the Grecian play-writer, arguing philosophically that he has a right to be a miscreant, as an instance of the facility with which the scholars of Socrates could pervert the precepts of their master, has a close resemblance to the scenes that are passing in England at the present day, and which, in my opinion, owe their origin to the overstrained and unsatisfactory system of education, that, for the last twenty or thirty years, has been adopted with the lower orders of society.

I cannot exactly make up my mind as to the relative states of French and English poor—I mean, as to their means of existence, their privations, and so forth. Were I to be guided by what I see in this part of France, I should at once assert that there is nothing like the extent of poverty that is to be found, generally, in the interior agricultural districts in England. But the immense influx of English money in the towns of Calais, Boulogne, and others of the *pas de Calais,* gives a stimulus to everything in the vicinity of them which is not to be looked for in other parts of the kingdom. I certainly do not see much of what is called squalid poverty in the *pas de Calais.* On the contrary, the poor people and their children are, for the most part, tidily clothed—that is to say, there may be patches, but no rags. Neither is it at all common to see children barefooted; and their general appearance denotes a sufficiency of food, be the nature of it what it may.

On the subject of food, I am inclined to the notion, that although that of the French poor is not so invigorating in its nature as that eaten by the children of our poor, it is more abundant, from the way in which it is prepared. We may laugh at the Frenchman and his soup; but meagre though it be, when I see a French labourer, on a cold wet day, lapping up a warm mess of something that smells savoury, in which are to be seen plenty of good bread and excellent vegetables, and reflect that the same description of human being, in my own country, may, under similar circumstances—I mean, on a cold wet day—be making his dinner on a hunch of dry bread and a bit of drier cheese, and with nothing, perhaps, to wash all down but cold water, I must decide in favour of the Frenchman and his broth.

Perhaps some of my readers may like to be told what this broth is made of. It merely consists of water, in which cabbage, turnips, or carrots, or all the three, with onions or leeks, are boiled, and to which is added bread, and a small portion of either the fat of bacon or pork, or in their absence, a lump of what we call "lard."

I have reason to believe, the supper of the French labourer is his best and most savoury meal. It consists of potatoes and other vegetables—often spinach—tossed in a pan, with onions and a little meat of some sort, generally the fat of the hog. Skimmed milk, purchased for two sous a quart, and buttermilk still cheaper, also form a part of the supper of a French labourer's family.

The pleasures of a cottage—that is, of the poor man's cottage—are a phantom; and it is only he who never enters it that will be deceived on this point. Nevertheless, as in all situations in life, much depends on the habits of the occupiers, as to the comfort of the labouring man's cottage. Generally speaking, I find nothing to object to in the interior of the French cottages; they exhibit about as many requisites as can be looked for from the resources of their occupiers; indeed, they oftentimes aspire to ornaments, the most conspicuous of which is a bust or a picture of Napoleon, whose memory will prove imperishable in France. But I cannot say so much for the *exterior* of the French cottage.

Here, to say the least of them, the indelicate habits of the people spoil the effect of any little attempt to attract the eyes of the traveller to what may otherwise be worthy of his observance, and creditable to themselves, in a national point of view. Taking it on the whole, then, the preference must at once be given to the English country-cottage, which is invariably free from the above reproach, and generally an object, not merely pleasing to the eye, but oftentimes a fit subject for the pencil of the artist.

Of the situation of the manufacturing poor of France, I am unable to offer an opinion. At certain periods, however, within the last five or six years, they have been, like our own, exposed to great privations, by the want of a brisk demand for the various articles manufactured by them.

Mendicity in France has greatly decreased since I have resided in it. Even the number of those who made their weekly calls at my door has diminished one-half. For a little broken victuals or a sous, a multitude of benedictions are poured forth by this description of the French people, who appear to be really objects of charity, in the strictest sense of the phrase. They have a licence to solicit relief from house to house.

My readers, generally, are aware that poor-laws, as we term them, are unknown in France, but the really indigent are relieved by a fund at the disposal of the authorities, chiefly arising from donations, private as well as public. In a late French paper I read that sixty thousand persons were on the "List of Indigents" in Paris!

There is a good deal of roundabout as well as ostentatious ceremony in French marriages. In the first place, the names of the parties are stuck on the door of the town-hall a fortnight previous to the approaching day, as well as the forthcoming event being announced in the provincial newspaper. Then, when the happy day arrives, instead of going at once to the "hymeneal altar," the bridal party are obliged to present themselves to the authorities at the Hotel de Ville, proceeding thence to their church. The procession generally consists —in the middle rank of life at least—of from three to five hired carriages, the drivers of them having a bunch of ribbons tied at the end of the crop of their whips, and if the "happy pair" reside in a town, and are of the respectable order, large flags are hoisted over the door of the bride's house. as well as over several of those of her neighbours, and occasionally suspended by ropes across the street. A good supper generally closes the wedding-day.

A curious distinction is observed amongst the lower orders. Should one of them not belong to the same parish with the other, a firing of guns is kept up during the whole evening of the wedding-day. Something like a jumble of the church bells occasionally takes place, but as to "a peal of bells," I have yet to hear that in France. "Those evening bells," with their beautiful melody, are only to be heard in one or two countries under the sun.

There is, in one respect, a striking difference between an English and a French wedding, in the lower orders of society. With us the parties endeavour to avoid the public gaze ; and here they court it. They will be seen parading the streets and the adjoining public ways, not only on the wedding-day, but on the day following. They have also a curious custom of issuing circulars, announcing their nuptials, one of which, having just received it, I shall here transcribe :

"Monsieur et Madame Ducastel, et Delvue, ont l'honneur de vous faire part du marriage de Monsieur Louis Ducastel, leur fils, Docteur en médecine, avec Mademoiselle Sophie Gonard.

"*Calais*, 16 *Janvier*, 1840."

I was for some time at a loss, having no knowledge of the young doctor or his bride, for the reason of this compliment being paid to me ; but at length I recollected that I had purchased a carriage of a Monsieur Gonard, a coachmaker, who, I have since learnt, is father to the bride.

The French are very fond of, and very kind to, their own children, and also to those of others generally ; which is to a great degree proved by the wagon-loads of *bon-bons* and toys that are sold annually in each department throughout the kingdom. Their parents likewise bestow much pains on their dress, which, although frequently appearing fantastical in our eyes, is very creditable to them, as indicative of parental affection. Neither do they overlook them in their amusements. A Frenchman and his wife, in the middle classes of life, are seldom seen taking their pleasure unaccompanied —if they have them—by their children.

CHAPTER VI.

Irascible temper of the French—Their good-nature and politeness—Absence of duels—French and English sailors—Two Frenchmen fighting—Grimace—Passion of the French peasantry for linen—Washing-day only twice a-year—Increase of intemperance in France—Gratitude of the French for kindness—Sunday in France—Party-spirit in France and England—Religious ceremonies—The carnival—Its origin—Street oratory—General remarks on the French character—Their cruelty to animals—Their treatment of horses—Their parsimony—Profligacy of Paris compared with that of London—Belgium—Brussels—Agriculture of Belgium—Gardening—Social character of the higher orders—Its resemblance to the old English style—Count Duval—Magnificent hospitalities of the Chateau d'Attry.

The temper of a Frenchman, like that of a Welshman, is extremely irascible. I should be sorry, even if I had the strength and skill of a first-rate prize-fighter, to strike a Frenchman on any provocation, if he had a knife or any destructive weapon at his command. A friend of mine, a master of foxhounds, famous for the use of his fists, did try this experiment some years back, and was severely punished. He was kicked in a most cowardly manner, and was laid up for some time after from the consequences.

An instance of this irascibility and unfair means of resentment occurred in Calais. A man selling besoms, laid down a bundle of them close to the door of the keeper of a *café*. Some altercation took place in consequence, when the latter struck the besom-merchant on the head with an empty bottle, which he chanced to have in his hand, and all but killed him on the spot. This violence of conduct is not consistent with the general characteristic of the French people, which is certainly kindness of disposition, humanity, and extreme good nature—in the common acceptation of the latter term.

A Frenchman certainly exhibits his good nature and politeness in the most trifling points. For example: he never takes a pinch of snuff that he does not offer you his box, stranger though you may be. The presenting the snuff-box, however, as a token of civility, is an old custom, and that of men and women kissing each other in public is very old indeed, and is a pleasing relic of primitive manners.

The temper and conduct of the French in social life may in part be estimated by one isolated fact. Within the space of my residence here, there have been several duels (one fatal) among the English, but I can only hear of one that has taken place amongst the French, the soldiers excepted.

I will add another fact in reference to the lower orders of the people, and that class of them which, among ourselves, is the most reckless and abandoned of all. It has twice been my lot to be in a situation of some peril on the sea within the last two years—once, in a French open boat, the other time in an English one. And mark the conduct of the crews. The only exclamation I heard by the former was "*fort*," or "*vite*," as much as to say, "pull away *strong*, my boys," as they saw a wave threatening to overwhelm us ; whereas with the latter, a blasphemous oath may be said to have accompanied nearly each stroke of the oar. Then the fishermen on this coast, and especially of this town, are remarkable for their religious observances.

It is very amusing to me to see two Frenchmen in a rage with each other. Forbidden by the laws to strike, or, as we say, to see which is the best man, they have nothing for it but the tongue, accompanied with gestures the most ridiculous that can be conceived. I once saw an attempt at a turn-up between two French workmen, who set about it with no small parade. Not a blow passed that would have made a child's nose bleed ; and in the fourth round, one of the combatants ran with his head full butt against his opponent's stomach, which "settled the hash," and they instantly embraced each other. I should observe, both were a little tipsy; but it was a truly laughable affair. There have been two or three pitched battles for money between some of the Nottingham lace-weavers here, at which many French of their grade in life were present, and they did not fail giving it as their opinion that they were great fools to get so knocked about, especially when *one* of them must lose both the battle and his money.

But a word more on what we call the grimace of a Frenchman, which is chiefly to be ascribed to a natural impetuosity of temperament, although oftentimes made available to a mere strong expression of his feelings. Undoubtedly there is something almost irresistible—at all events indisputable—in the shrug of a Frenchman's shoulders, accompanied by a peculiar expression of face; it is a sort of knock-down blow. These gestures remind one of what was said of the first of the ancient Romans who were bold enough to attempt the pantomimic art—namely, that they were men whose eloquent hands had, as it were, a tongue on every finger,—who spoke when they were silent—" *dum tacent, clamant.*"

Amongst the minor peculiarities of the French people, is their passion for the possession of a large stock of linen. In my rides about the country, in its remotest parts, my astonishment is excited at the quantity I see spread on hedges to dry, belonging to one house, and this perhaps occupied by a very small farmer, if not a day-labourer. That the acquisition of this treasure is creditable to the industry of its possessors, there can be no doubt; but it is attended with a very serious evil: it enables them to keep all the used linen of six consecutive months in their houses, having only two cleansings of it during the entire year.

Although I have stated that within the last two years the vice of drinking to excess has appeared to me, and to others, to be on the increase in this neighbourhood, the general temperance of the lower orders of the French people is remarkable. I can give an extraordinary instance of this. To make amends for some injury done by my dogs to three neighbouring market-gardeners, by scampering over their newly-sown beds, I give them an annual dinner of roast beef and plum-pudding. A few days ago was the anniversary; and after a moderate allowance of ale—not a quart each—a bottle of brandy was put before them, but it remained untouched!

The French appear to me to be not only highly sensible of acts of civility and respect—in fact, be *civil* to them and you may do anything with them,—but grateful for what may be considered benefits. I now allude to the lower orders, and will give an instance or two. During the raging of the cholera, I stopped the progress of the disease, in the case of a weaver's wife, near to my house, by a timely administration of medicine, and she displayed her gratitude by sending me, on three consecutive Easter Sundays, and would have continued doing so had I not put a stop to it, a large custard-pie, of her own manufacture. Then the bargemen on the canal in the rear of my house, and the labourers in the large open field already spoken of—if I send them a bottle of a common wine when at their dinners, on a hot day, or a jug of warm coffee when at their breakfast, on a cold one, I ensure their high regard; and should my boat be found adrift by the former, it is sure to be safely moored, and any little service from the latter is at my command. And the same is the case amongst the higher orders. I procured some stable servants for the Prince of Moskwa, and purchased for him a race-horse, which proved more than commonly successful.* There appear to be no limits to his gratitude for these trifling exertions.

In all highly civilized countries the necessities and wants of society require that of a certain portion of the people it may be said,

> "Even Sunday shines no sabbath-day to them;"

but, on the other hand, in France, numbers who might avail themselves of rest on that day set apart for it by command, spontaneously reject the boon; and too many seem to think that, after the manner of the Psalmist, to "praise his name in the dance" is all that is necessary towards propitiating the Author of that special command. Now I am one of those who cannot bring themselves to believe that the Sabbath is not intended to be a day of recreation and pleasure, as well as of holy exercise; or that it is at any time forbidden to mankind to forget the cares and inevitable calamities of life, in the enjoyment of the fleeting hour; and I am quite assured that those persons in my own country who would abridge the harmless amusements of the people on a Sunday, are far from being their friends, in a moral point of view.

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* He won eleven races at thirteen starts.

It has oftentimes struck me that the political world in France would be more at rest than it is, were the pursuits of the people, generally, of a more manly character than they are—more of a sporting one, I may say. The subjects of the chase and the turf, coursing and shooting, are prevalent themes with the English, when they meet together; and how much better is it that they should be harmlessly discoursing on such measures than caballing to upset the government, or to kill their sovereign! From the division of property in this country, the number of persons living on small incomes, just enabling them to be independent—in other words, to be idle—is vastly greater than it is in ours,—as a journey through the principal, and even the small country-towns, will prove. Having no interest in agricultural pursuits, nor partaking of the sports of the field, they have little beyond their mere domestic concerns to furnish topics for conversation, and consequently politics become the theme.

I cannot learn however that, party-stricken as they are, a difference of opinion creates ill-will amongst the French people, to any thing like the extent that it has lately done in my own country, where—although I dare say the fact was not believed, as stated by me, in my Scotch Tour—a Whig master of foxhounds would not follow his pack into a certain part of his country, *because it abounded with Tory lairds!*

The example of all antiquity ought to operate, with educated English gentlemen, against such narrow-minded views. The friendship of Tacitus and Pliny became almost proverbial, the one being scarcely mentioned without the other; and yet Tacitus was as much a republican as Pliny was an admirer of the imperial power, and of the short-lived virtues of his patron, Trajan.

Neither does there appear to be any interruption to society in France by a difference of opinion on subjects connected with religion; which is no small advantage. What is called religious hypocrisy is a *rara avis* in France, and well it is that it is so; for as Bacon observes, hypocrisy in one age is almost sure to be followed by atheism in another; and we see something in our own country to substantiate the truth of this fearful prediction. Of religion in France, however, I do not feel myself qualified to say more than I have already done; unless it be to bear witness to certain ceremonies of the Catholic church, which I cannot but call absurdities: for example, blessing the sea by the priests, previously to the commencement of the mackerel fishing: and when a priest walks in procession, in the ceremony of blessing the crops, he travels in something like a child's go-cart; whilst the streets are strewed with herbs, rushes, &c., and have ornamented altars, resembling children's baby-houses, at each corner of them.

Although the origin of the Carnival may be difficult to trace, I conceive it to be a relic of the Saturnalian or Bacchanalian festivals, improperly introduced into Christian countries. It is said to be a period of great indulgence, but it does not appear to be so in Calais, or any thing beyond the mere exhibitions in the streets, eminently adapted to the amusement of children. To a rational mind, the whole thing is productive of any thing but pleasure, still less satisfaction. Three or four years back, there was a remarkable falling off in the celebration of the

Carnival at Calais. On my noticing the circumstance to Monsieur Pigault de Beaupré, brother to the celebrated novelist, and himself a well-known author, he replied, in English, that "people were becoming more *reasonable*:" of course he meant rational.

There is one species of drollery often exhibited in the streets of Calais, which I hold to be good. A clever fellow, in his way, fantastically dressed, with a fiddle in his hand, goes about, either singing or reciting to his admiring audience. This kind of street oratory not only amuses the country bumpkins on a market day, and keeps them from less injurious and more expensive pastimes, but it gives them at the same time some general ideas on certain subjects —history for one—of which they otherwise might know nothing. A few days back, indeed, I saw a dashing female in a scarlet habit, addressing the people from her saddle, on the character and exploits of their favourite Napoleon, whose memory in France will never perish, so long as the sun continues to shine on the soil.

A friend of mine, one of the oldest English residents in France, thus addressed me on the perusal of my remarks on the treatment of animals in France: "Have you not over-coloured the virtues of the French people, when you speak of their humanity towards animals? Do you forget the exhibitions you have seen in the streets of Calais, of bears and donkeys baited by dogs, under the eyes of the authorities, and the abuse of old horses to a great degree, to which it appears to me, the French are given to an unpardonable extent, although I admit their extreme tenderness towards young ones?"

To this I replied, that I certainly did witness, five or six years back, the disgusting spectacle of a bear being lacerated by dogs, without limit as to his power of defence, and also a donkey baited by them; although the said donkey, by the nimble and efficient use of his heels, had the best of the turn-up. But is not this brutal system of baiting of animals, if not an inherent passion in human nature, one which either is, or has been, practised in all civilized countries, although fast disappearing, by the influence of a better and more Christian feeling? And, I am happy to say, no exhibition of the sort has occurred here since the period alluded to.

As regards their treatment of "*old* horses," alas! it is the fate of old horses to be ill treated in all countries, by reason of their falling into the hands of the very lowest order of horse-owners. I maintain, however, the justness of my praise to the French in this instance, by an appeal to the prevailing good condition of by far the greater proportion of their horses, of all descriptions, as well as to the very moderate rate at which they both ride and drive them on the road. For example, some may remember my mention of the answer given to me, two years back, by the ostler at a French inn, to the question of how *far* it was to a certain place, to which I was about to proceed. "It is *six* quarters of an hour," said he, measuring distance by time, according to the primitive notions of his order of persons, in this part of the country. I then proceeded to state, that within the space of *ten* quarters of an hour, I rode the same horse, on that same day, upwards of four times the distance calculated, and dressed myself from head to foot, as well.*

"Then," resumed my friend, "do you not think the generality of the French people carry their economy in money matters much too far—even to meanness? It is evident from the fact, that no Jew can do well in their country."

"So much the better," I replied; "I always like to hear of Moses meeting with his match. I am ready to admit that, independently of their temperate habits, the French, generally speaking, are what we call "close shavers;" but allow me to ask you, whether the examples of reckless prodigality in so many of our countrymen, who have resided amongst them, and its consequences, have not, in a great measure, increased their caution in matters of expense?"*

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* Should the reader of these remarks chance to stumble upon an excellent book, lately published by Mr. Youatt, on the "Obligation and Extent of Humanity to Brutes," and read the chapters on the following subjects,—viz. "Carmen's, Nightmen's, and Rubbish Cart Horses," "The Barge Horse," "The Omnibus and Cab Horse," and "The Knacker's Yard," he may not, perhaps, blush for his own country; but should he ever have been in France, he will assure himself that no cruelty practised towards animals, either there or anywhere else, can exceed the amount of that described by the humane and talented writer alluded to. For myself, I am inclined to doubt whether it can be equalled.

"Are they not profligate—in Paris, especially?" was the next question.

"Cannot we match them in London?" was my answer. But let us define profligacy. Cicero says of Verres, that he was "Omnium mortalium profligatissimus ac perditissimus" — abandoned and lost to every sense of shame,—in which sense the word profligate is used by our own best authors. But can this charge against the French people be established? Certainly not. If my friend meant to imply that there is much of dreadful depravity and debauchery in the city of Paris, amongst a certain class of the population, I can only answer him by saying, that I have reason to believe London is its match in that respect. I certainly have heard of some most disgusting exhibitions in Paris, tending to demoralize and corrupt young people to the highest possible extent; but, do no such exhibitions exist in London? I am wrongly informed, if they do not. It is, however, to be lamented, that they should exist in any civilized country, and more especially in one which assumes to itself the lead in human civilization.

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* I speak from a knowledge of the fact, when I state, that a few years back, one English resident in Calais received 1700*l.* in the course of one year, and was in jail in the next. Another spent 800*l.* per annum, having an income of 400*l.*, and to jail he went.

May I be permitted to step over the border for a few minutes, and say a word or two touching Belgium? of which country I have some knowledge,—first, by attending Brussels races, and, secondly, by my visits to the Count Duval de Beaulieu, one of the most influential noblemen of the kingdom.

I was much pleased with Brussels. Independently of the attraction of the park, which, from the beauty and variety of its scenery, may be said to blend the gaiety and splendour of a capital with the unpretending quiet of the country, the surrounding neighbourhood is most beautiful and picturesque ; particularly inviting to those who keep carriages and horses, and avail themselves of the benefit of out-of-door exercise in a salubrious air—which that in the environs of Brussels certainly is.

Looking at Belgium with an agricultural eye, I could not forget that England owes her agriculture to the example of that country ; albeit the pupil has long since outstripped her preceptor, by means which it is unnecessary to name. Even our flowers and fruits, as well as vegetables—at least several of the choicest of their kind—were originally brought from Belgium, the excellence of which we find extolled by Pliny, as likewise the remarkable fertility of her soil. But the history of this fine country plainly shews, that although the monks were among its original cultivators, the several princes who in succession governed it have been uniformly found to afford most liberal encouragement to agriculture generally, considering it, *as it is*, the original and only *certain* source of national wealth and happiness. And it is a creditable feature in the history of Belgium, and complimentary to the industry of its people, that it contains the smallest extent of uncultivated land of any European country—a ninth part of it only lying waste.

Of the social character of the upper orders of the Belgians I am enabled to speak from my intercourse with many of the *élite* of them, during my visit to Count Duval, to celebrate the *fête* of St. Hubert, the patron saint of the Belgic chase, when the count has a party of between thirty and forty of both sexes at his chateau, together with their servants and horses, for the entire week, besides daily additions from the families of his aristocratic neighbourhood.

To give an honest opinion, the Belgian nobility do not appear to me to be quite so refined in their manners and general deportment as their compeers in France. On the other hand, there is about them a heartiness of manner, bearing the stamp of sincerity, which makes ample amends for the other, perhaps minor, acquirement.

In other respects, society in the part of Belgium to which I allude, strongly reminded me of what it was in my own country, previously to that overstrained refinement which has for some time distinguished it from that of all other countries I have visited. I allude to the fact of several of the occupiers—most of them noble—of the various neighbouring chateaux, coming, some in their carriages, others on their hacks, to join our dinner-party at the count's, and returning to their homes when the festivities of the evening were over. Then they would drop in upon us at the breakfast-hour, some to join the chase, others to see their friends, in the pleasing, unreserved manner, which betokens real friendship, divested of cold-hearted ceremony.

Finally, I may say of my host of the noble Chateau d'Attry, by way of a partial illustration of a Belgic nobleman, having tastes congenial with many of his order in my own country, that,—independently of his being chief senator of his department, which of course imposes upon him many important duties; grand master of the Belgic chase; president of the Belgic jockey-club, and also of the "Society for the improvement of the Breed of Horses;" owner of a pack of hounds, which he himself hunts; proprietor also of the largest stud of race-horses in his country; occupier of an immense tract of land, which he farms in a spirited and scientific manner; and the owner of at least three hundred horses of various breeds and descriptions;—besides performing the duties attached to all these,—he finds leisure to exercise the rites of hospitality, to a degree nearly equal to that of a Belvoir Castle, or a Badminton, in England; and this not only at the Chateau d'Attry, but in Brussels.

CHAPTER VII.

Picture of an English sportsman—Annual cost of a pack of fox-hounds—A fox-hunter's stables—Coursing and shooting establishments—Lord Fitzhardinge—Sporting costume—Deer-stalking—Melton—The Continental sportsman—Count Hahn's boar-hounds—Fox-hounds in France—Prince Esterhazy's pack in Hungary—Duke of Orleans' pack at Chantilly—A stag-hunt in France—Relays of hounds—An incident—Singular run—Deer-slotting—The late Duke of Bourbon—His sporting establishment—Extraordinary run with stag-hounds—Sporting costume in England and France—Goosey, huntsman of the Belvoir pack—A run with the Prince of Wagram's hounds—Napoleon and Asheton Smith—Revolution in French riding—Royal steeple-chasing.

Such is the effect of what are called prejudices, imbibed as they are said to be with one's mother's milk, that it is almost impossible for an Englishman to picture to himself a being coming under the strict acceptation of the word *sportsman,* in any country but his own—in France especially. But whence this boasted superiority of Britain's sons in this department of practical pastimes? I reply—where, but in his own country, will you find a parallel to the following picture of the British sportsman?

The British sportsman has a pack of fox-hounds in his kennel—at all events we will allude to one of his order who has—at a minimum expenditure of three thousand pounds a-year! And mark the regularity of the proceedings attending this department of an English sportsman's establishment. I think I have previously stated that no merchant's affairs are conducted with a stricter attention to order and regularity; and a degree of discipline is enforced throughout the whole system of a kennel, that is only to be equalled in martial life.

Then walk into the stables of the British master of fox-hounds, and a sight is presented to your admiring eyes that no other country under the sun can shew. Forty horses, of the finest shape, and of high blood, all perfect masters of their business, and in the highest state of condition that it is possible for the art of man to enable them to attain!

Again, should the British sportsman be content to fly at lower game, and have a pack of harriers in his kennel, the like order and discipline reign there, and his stable appointments are also available to his more moderate ends. But he may descend still lower in the scale, and enter the coursing-field. Look at him there, with his dogs in body-clothes, and with skins like satin, the reward of his unceasing care since they were weaned from their dams.

But his shooting establishment! Why, here, perhaps, he may, to a certain extent, yield the *pas*; I was in the field with a German count who had thirty-five gamekeepers constantly in his employ, although, call them " keepers and watchers," and our

Lord Fitzhardinge (late Lord Seagrave) beats him by fifteen head of this order of green-coated menials.

But in real truth, neither by the quantity of his game, nor the number of its keepers, is the character of the sportsman, or the sport produced by them, by any means to be estimated. The question is, in what order and condition are the owner's dogs turned out? Are they perfect in their quartering the ground; steady to dog and gun, and down charge, as though they were as dead as the game that lies before them, if pointers or setters; and never out of gun-shot, and as mute as though they were tongueless, if spaniels. Then their owner, how is he turned out? Is he encumbered, as his brethren of the gun on the Continent are, with a game-bag that would hold a young calf, and half-a-dozen other unnecessary appendages? No; he leaves these matters to his attendants, and sallies forth from his hall on a well-broken pony, from whose back at least one-half of his game is killed.

And see him on the Scotch moors, giving some hundreds a year for the privilege! Nor do grouse content him; the stag of the forest must fall to his unerring rifle, and he is found deer-stalking among the cliffs and crags of Ben-y-venie, or Cairn-cherie. He is next at Melton, with sixteen hunters and two hacks, not forgetting the dog-cook. And why does he go thither? Because the country by which it is surrounded is the only one in the world in which fox-hunting can be enjoyed to the greatest advantage. Here he hunts six days a week, and goes through fatigue that no continental sportsman would be paid to endure.

Suppose him to be a racing man, and on a large scale. His stakes alone will amount to five thousand pounds per annum, and his annual expenses of breeding, rearing, and training, to double that sum. What a startling consideration is it then, that, to square his accounts, he must realize fifteen thousand pounds in each year—a speculation which the pluck of an Englishman only —one of princely fortune at least—would ever dream of indulging in. But suppose him to be a man of moderate means, to whom such luxuries as these are not upon the cards. We find him with a leash of good pointers, a brace of well-broken cockers, and, perhaps, a small kennel of greyhounds at his own home, and with three or four hunters in stable, which enable him to take the field three or four times a week.

Let us now turn to the continental sportsman. If a master of hounds, in what consist his chief desires? Parade and show. Without laced coats and cocked hats, and music, the best run of the season would be considered a failure by the field. Then for a sample of their hounds, whither shall I go? To Count Hahn's boar-hounds? Yes, for they were good of their sort, when I saw them thirteen years back, for the game they hunted,—being half hound, half mastiff, with the strength of lions, and chained to the wall to guard against their savage disposition.

But fox-hounds! a continental owner of such animals is yet to be looked for, and he will be looked for in vain. There is a small pack at St. Omer, and also another at Boulogne, both kept by Englishmen, but they do not meet with much encouragement. Prince Esterhazy, also, had a pack of fox-hounds, some years back, in Hungary; and during the residence of Lord Stewart, in 1826, at the chateau at which they were kept, they were hunted by the celebrated Tom Crane, who hunted the hounds of the Duke of Wellington in Spain, and subsequently the Fife pack in Scotland, in whose service he died. And the mention of the Boulogne fox-hounds—which were recently given up—leads me to relate the following anecdote, by which it would appear that fox-hunting in France is not likely to be popular. A fox having been caught in a bag by the guard of a rabbit-warren, hired by an English gentleman, was sent to the manager of the Boulogne fox-hounds, and turned out on the morrow. Previously to "shaking him," however, two gendarmes made their appearance, and requested to have given them, *in writing*, the names and residences of the whole host of Nimrods assembled for the day's sport; which request was complied with.

The Duke of Orleans has a pack of fox-hounds at Chantilly, and I saw them at exercise in the park, attended by five men in green jackets and caps, but not *hunting-caps*. They consisted of thirty-one couples; but their being in part designed for separate purposes, spoiled their appearance in a sportsman's eye, although he might have picked out about fifteen couples that would have given a good account of a Billesden Coplow fox, being of our own breed. An *émeute* at Paris, a day or two previously, prevented my seeing these hounds in the field, therefore I am unable to say anything of their performances; but the preceding year I saw those of the Prince of Wagram at work in the Chantilly forest, and the death of a fine stag was the day's result. But how was it accomplished? In a sportsmanlike manner? Why I hardly know what to say to this question. The turn-out was good to a certain extent, and especially so to a continental eye. There were two huntsmen in heavily-laced coats and cocked-hats, and three prickers (or whippers in), in green coats with red collars; but the fatness of their horses, and the cruppers to the saddles, spoilt all to an English eye. And yet there was something business-like in the whole thing, the prince being clad exactly like the prickers.

The *find* was good, management being shewn in turning the hounds from the scent of a hind which was found at the same moment with the stag; and as it was effected in the middle of a large wood, and with a ravishing scent, which a fresh-found deer invariably imparts, was far from being an easy task. But the pack being broken into what are called "relays" of hounds, posted to meet the stag at points, is, in my opinion, a great drawback from the spirit of the chase, and also from the merit of hounds, besides having the effect of making them wild.

There was a singular incident in this run, as far as I was concerned, which might not occur a second time in a century, much less in any one man's life. After running the stag for an hour or more, in the forest, the crowd of horsemen—three hundred at least—pursuing the various tracts or "ridings," as we call them in England, I indulged in the speculation that we were approaching the open country, and that it was possible the stag might face it; so, striking out of the riding, and following the hounds through the rough parts of the wood, I was soon rewarded for so doing. I found myself by the side of them, clear of the forest, with a fine champaign country before me, and every appearance of enjoying a fine run. But where were the three hundred horsemen—*the field*? Why, strange to say, with the exception of the trainer and jockey to the Duke of Orleans, and one French gentleman, by keeping the beaten track, they all lost the cry of the pack, and, consequently, as pretty a hunt, for about six miles over the open country, as any one could desire to see.

The singularity of the fact consists in

this,—that out of such a number of well-mounted continental sportsmen—for such they were—three Englishmen only should have got away with the hounds—(the Frenchman was soon put *hors de combat* by a fall)—and this merely because they acted the parts of English sportsmen, in following the hounds, and not galloping to *points*, as is the custom of continental stag-hunters. Our run lasted nearly three hours, during the latter part of which time about seventy of the field came up to us—the Duke of Orleans, who had kindly mounted me, amongst the number—and the finish was very good. We fresh found the stag in a small copse, from which he went away in view, and, in endeavouring to leap a wall into a gentleman's domain, he fell back and died.

As neither of the huntsmen were with us in the most trying part of the chase, I could not appreciate their merits as sportsmen; but I witnessed a fine display of science in an old servant of the celebrated Duke of Bourbon, in slotting the lost deer over very difficult ground. With *what* eyes he looked at the ground over which our game had travelled, I am quite unable to say; but this I know, that, on spots over which he slotted him keenly, I could not discover the slightest impression of his foot.

This was the first time of my hearing music applied to hounds in chase, but I must admit that there was something very cheering in its effect, although the absence of one of the huntsmen tended to diminish it. Several noblemen and gentlemen carried horns slung over their shoulders, but they only accompanied the huntsmen in sounding the *mort*, which was placed at intervals during our return to Chantilly, distant fifteen miles from where our stag died.

But in speaking of continental sportsmen, where was there, or where will there be found, an equal to the said Duke of Bourbon?—Ay, and in what country? for I will challenge all Europe to produce him! This insatiable sportsman either hunted or shot every day in the year, Sundays excepted, four hours' repose at night being his maximum allowance. Then the distance he would go to meet his hounds almost staggers belief. Thirty miles was considered a moderate one; and, having said this, it is not to be wondered at that he should have worn out six persons who had to take their turns—two at a time—in attendance upon him. His royal highness, however, reached his seventieth year, and died very generally lamented.

I had an opportunity of examining the yearly accounts—very accurately kept—of the game killed by the different packs of hounds of this most illustrious sportsman. In some of the years his success was astonishing. For example:—in 1829, only two wild boars were lost out of one hundred and twenty-four hunted! In 1827, only six wild stags escaped out of eighty-three hunted; and in 1828, only two out of ninety-two. The greatest number of failures was with the Chevreuil hounds, by reason of the short running of this game rendering the hunting of them so difficult.

I much lament not having accepted the

invitation I had the honour to receive from his royal highness, to witness his performance in the field. It was accompanied by a summary of that year's sport, signed by one of the noblemen attached to his person, and conveyed to me by that good sportsman, Sir Maxwell Wallace, colonel of the 5th Dragoon Guards.

I thus, on a former occasion, spoke of his royal highness:—"As may be supposed, from his vast experience, the late Duke of Bourbon was a good judge of hounds, and everything relating to hunting; and although during his long residence in England, his peculiar situation at the time precluded his indulging his passion for it beyond the enjoyment of harriers, which he kept at Woodford, in Essex, during his residence at Wansted-house, his establishment at Chantilly almost exceeds belief. Of stag-hounds he had seventy couples; of boar-hounds, eighty; of roebuck-hounds, sixty: total, two hundred and ten couples in his kennels. Of hunters he had upwards of a hundred, and upwards of one hundred and fifty carriage-horses and hacks. At his death there were five hundred and fourteen servants on the books, receiving monthly pay, one hundred and twenty of whom were in the stables and kennels alone! I forgot to inquire what became of the hounds and horses when that event took place, but the almost immediate destruction of the game followed, notices being placed on all the neighbouring church doors, announcing it to be *omnibus communis;* and venison was, in consequence, sold at three *sous* per pound, with other species of *feræ* in proportion."

Again, on my asking the person (an Englishman with whom I was previously acquainted) whose office, under the late duke, was to superintend the kennels and stables, how the hounds and horses stood their work in the hot months of summer, he replied, that I should be surprised to hear that they did better in the summer than in the winter; and he assured me he only recollected one instance of a horse dropping in the field from the effect of heat

—adding, that he saw a run of five horses with a stag, with the thermometer at eighty-seven in the shade! This is staggering to an Englishman's faith, but the well-known respectability of my informant (whose son is now in a confidential situation at the royal chateau at Chantilly) places the facts beyond doubt or dispute; and they may be accounted for thus: The soil is generally sandy, consequently its surface is never very hard, and there was little or no fencing. These circumstances operated favourably with the hounds; and both horses and hounds received relief from a current or stream of air which always more or less prevails in the glades of a forest, as well as from the benefit of shade. Occasionally, too, when the weather was warm, the full power of a meridian sun was avoided by the hour of meeting being postponed until its rays began to decline.

When on this subject, I cannot forbear to mention the relation of the following anecdote, as thus introduced by me in one of my French tours: "Since my return from Chantilly, a very good old sportsman, but never a stag-hunter, expressed to me his doubts of a wild stag, feeding *ad libitum,* being able to stand more than an hour before a good pack of English foxhounds, on a fair scenting day. My slight experience in such matters disables me from hazarding a decided opinion here; but I will transcribe a few of the particulars of a run in my own country, with an animal of this description, so far back as the reign of Charles II. and in the year 1684—given to the late Mr. Tharrott (the person of whom I have been speaking, as having superintended the Duke of Bourbon's hunting establishment,) by the late Mr. Sharpe, whom I knew well when huntsman to King George III. The deer was *roused* (there was no turning out deer in those days from carts, nor foxes from bags) at Swinley, in Windsor forest; and after tracing the country to the extent of seventy-five miles by the map, was taken at Thorndon Hall, in Essex, the seat of the then Lord Petre, under whose roof the *five horse-*

men only, out of a numerous field, who went to the end of the chase, slept that night. Amongst them was the then Duke of York, who went to court the next day, and informed the king of the glorious sport his hounds had shewn him. When I state, that the chase led, in one direction, through the parishes of Amersham and Chesham, in Buckinghamshire; in another, through those of Redburn and Hatfield, in Hertfordshire; and was concluded in that of Brentwood, in Essex, there could have been no exaggeration in the stated distance."

Although it may not be done to our taste, the *science* of hunting is well understood on the Continent, although the condition of hounds and horses is comparatively little regarded, because not so well understood. But it is the science displayed in these respects, that has given, and will continue to give, British sportsmen the advantage over all others in the world. Were you to talk to a continental sportsman about a hound being fed *to a mouthful*—in other words, that to place him on a par with the rest of the pack, as to speed and endurance, it is necessary that he should be fed almost to a mouthful—he would laugh, and think you were joking. Were you to describe to him the necessity for the pureness, and the proper age of the oatmeal, which makes what, in kennel language, is called the pudding, and that by the setting, or thickening of that pudding, were such properties to be discovered, he would believe you were talking nonsense. Did you tell him it was necessary that the flesh which was to be mixed up with this pudding, should be as sweet and free from taint as the beef he himself ate, he would smile, and say, "A dog will eat anything." Did you observe to him that his hounds did not carry a good head in chase, he would answer, "What matters it? they killed their game." Were he to be told that some of his pack skirted, that is, left the line of scent, to endeavour to meet their game at points, he would congratulate himself upon having such in his kennel, as they were the more likely to catch it. In short, the extreme *minutiæ* of the science are disregarded on the Continent, and consequently the high state of perfection to which it is carried in Great Britain, cannot possibly be attained.

That there should be a striking difference in the nature and appearance of the servants attached to continental hunting establishments and our own, cannot create surprise ; and great would be the contrast between Mr. Goosey, at the head of the Belvoir pack, in his stained red coat, blue to the waist from the perspiration of his horse ; his snug-looking black cap, also stained by weather ; his well-scratched brown topped boots, and his dirt-coloured corduroys ; and the resplendent laced clothes, huge cocked hat, also laced, and the well polished jack-boots, of the huntsman of the Prince of Wagram, or any other continental grandee. Neither would the non-resemblance end here. Goosey, on what might be considered a mean-looking horse, with bunged and scored legs, would go across three fields, whilst his brother huntsman from foreign parts would get across two.

But all this would be congenial, compared with the differences in costume and appearance of what may be called a kennel man, or feeder, in our own country, and that of the person filling the office of "valet," as he was termed, to the Prince of Wagram's Pack, when I saw them in the kennel at Chantilly, at the time the huntsman was shewing them to some of the Duke of Orleans' guests at the chateau. He had not only a smart cocked hat on his head, but he wore smart knee breeches, silk stockings, and very thin pumps! As this scene took place in the kennel, the only duty he had to perform was to turn the hounds back to their benches, which he did by calling out "Ho-ho!" a signal immediately obeyed; and as I did not see him on the field, I conclude to the kennel were his offices confined.

An excellent letter appeared some time last year in one of our sporting periodicals, describing a day's sport with Prince Wagram's hounds, in which the writer gave them credit for handiness in their work, and their fair condition.

From the fact of his acknowledging himself to be an Irishman, I have every reason to believe that "Vagrant" is the well-known good sportsman and hard rider, Mr. Bushe—*par excellence*, "Johnny Bushe" amongst his intimates, son of the late Irish judge of that name.

"We had run for nearly an hour," says Vagrant, "before the second detachment of hounds was allowed to join with those with which the attack was commenced. Shortly after this augmentation took place, when the hounds were running hard in one of the extreme segments of the wood, I ventured to express an opinion, accompanied by a fervent hope, that we were going to cross the open country before us; but I was surprised to find that such an event was neither expected nor wished for — a *débucher* being, as I was told, very rare. However, clinging to the hope of that which is the most exciting feature in *our* hunting, I cantered alone to the corner of the wood, towards which I had judged the hounds to be running, and was scarcely there, when, to my inexpressible delight, I saw the pack at one fling cross the fence into the splendid plain, which stretched before them *ad infinitum*, and over which they set a-going, heads up and sterns down, as if really bent upon business. All the reserve, which, as a stranger, I had heretofore observed, forsook me at this exhilarating movement, and forgetful of French forms, my Irish blood asserted itself in one of those hearty 'Gone aways!' with which all my former hunting experience was associated, and which I hoped would, on the present occasion, intimate to my friends at the other side of the wood the state of affairs."

The account proceeds to state, that after a beautiful burst of twenty minutes "over a fine flat country of grass, the hounds were brought to check by a flock of sheep, whose shepherd stated that the deer had headed back; and in the run I saw with these hounds much the same thing occurred, with the addition of a brace of wolves having been roused by the cry."

We both agree on another point—the absence of that enthusiastic wildness which is the boast and spirit, the heart and soul, of British fox-hunting, the followers of which would rather see an hour at a good pace, over a strongly-fenced country, with the pack in their view, than a month's galloping up one ride and down another, without seeing a hound, except now and then by chance, and this despite the music of a dozen French-horns. But here lies the contrast between English and continental hunting, and such will it ever be, as is thus clearly laid down by "Vagrant," who, on the day we have been speaking of, had *les honneurs de la chasse* conferred on him, as the only Englishman present.

"Our neighbours, the French," says he, "have had the good sense to imitate us in most things where horses and equipages are concerned, yet they seem to have made a special exception in favour of the *chasse au course.* In this country and age of revolutions, where thrones and dynasties have been overturned, and royalty desecrated and exiled, the noble science of wood-craft still remains unchanged, preserving in the general overthrow all the peculiarities of custom and *costume* which characterized it in the days of Louis XIV."

That the French nation, however, although in the peculiar instance of hunting, do not think proper to abandon their own ancient system, a celebrated English sportsman finds favour in their eyes; and I can offer a satisfactory example. When Mr. Thomas Assheton Smith, of great Leicestershire renown, was presented to Napoleon, he exclaimed on hearing his name, "*Ah! voilà le grand chasseur d'Angleterre!*" This was an unexpected compliment, and one by no means to be thought lightly of; but it retires into the shade when contrasted with that conferred upon this gallant sportsman, in his own country, last March twelve months, when, on his reappearance with his hounds in Leicestershire, after an absence of several years, he was greeted by two thousand of his brother sportsmen, many of whom travelled upwards of a hundred miles for the purpose.

A few years back it would have been next to an impossibility to convince an Englishman that a Frenchman could ride to hounds ; inasmuch as he—that is, the Englisman—could never divest his imagination of the jack-boot, demi-peak saddle, and stiff, unbending seat, which his Gallic neighbour considered essential to the *bon cavalier* of his country. But matters are strangely altered in these respects. It is true the postillion, and the farmer, and the tradesman, adhere to the jack-boot and jolting seat, which their forefathers considered both necessary and correct ; but a very great portion of the upper orders are now seen in saddles and with bridles of the simple English form, and rising in their stirrups, in the trot, as Englishmen have always done. In Paris, indeed, these alterations for the better are daily progressing ; and the poor horses themselves must hail the change with joy, from the enormous weight of an old-fashioned French saddle, to one of the size of ours, as well as in getting rid of the bumping of the rider's carcass against their backs and ribs.

But a still greater change has taken place in French horsemanship. In an excellent letter from a well-known English sportsman, to the old "Sporting Magazine," in 1825, descriptive of a run with the hounds of Charles X., the writer says, "I was sorry to see that a ditch, or little brook, stops them all." No doubt it did; for at that period leaping fences was never dreamt of in French philosophy. But such is far from being generally the case now. And in this solitary instance, good has been the result of steeple and hurdle races in France; inasmuch as they have introduced a spirit into French horsemanship, to which it was previously—in the hunting-field at least—a stranger. At the present time, there are many French gentlemen who would not be stopped by the Whissendine brook, an ox-fence, or by one of any description, which another man might be able to get over.

There are few better horsemen, either over a country or a race-course, than M. De Normandie, who has hunted in England for at least a dozen seasons. And what brought him to England for that purpose? Why, by his own admission, a letter of mine in the "Sporting Magazine," describing a run over Leicestershire. I would answer for it, both the heir-apparent to the throne of France*, and the Duke de Nemours, would go well to hounds in any part of England, for they are good horsemen, and have nerve for any thing. They tried their hands at a steeple-race some few years back, and went gallantly; but on the king being informed of it, and also that the Duke de Nemours had dislocated his shoulder in a fall, he put his veto on a further exhibition of royal steeple-racing.

Then there is a Count de Norney, who rides a race well; to which fact I can speak from having witnessed his performance; and he is also at the top of the tree amongst the steeple-race riders of his country. When in his racing saddle, he is in appearance a John White, or an Earl Wilton; and who would have looked for this twenty years back?

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* This, and what follows, was written before the unhappy decease of the late Duke of Orleans.

Parva sunt hæc; these are trifles in the eyes of a mere political economist; but the *non contemnenda* may be added, for they have done more towards cementing the bond of good fellowship that now happily exists between France and England, than many more weighty matters having a similar object in view. I can indeed take upon myself to assert, that at this time amongst sportsmen of the two countries, there exists as kind a feeling as in the general course of humanity is to be found amongst men in the upper walks of life, in their own native land; and this is saying much, and perhaps more than can be said of any other portion of the community.

Having spoken of steeple-racing in France, on this and other occasions, and having lately published a letter in the "Sporting Review," condemnatory of the cruel and unsportsmanlike character of the practice, I will repeat a conversation I had with his Royal Highness the Duke of Orleans on the subject; inasmuch as it will shew that I have been consistent in reprobation of what I have always considered to be unsportsmanlike and cruel; and, as late events have proved it to be, very prejudicial to fox-hunting, as also the very hotbed of fraud.

The Duke.—I am sorry, Mr. Apperly, to observe that you set your face against steeple-chasing. *You* ought to encourage every manly sport. For my own part, I like steeple-chases very much, and rode one myself a short time back, which my brother (the Duke de Nemours, who was at his elbow) won.

Nimrod.—I should regret extremely, sir, to know that any thing I may have written should have the effect of discouraging manly sports, and I assure your royal highness such was never my intention. I am apprehensive that the cause of fox-hunting will suffer from the present rage for steeple-chases, by either putting the occupiers of land out of humour, and eventually causing them to require damages for trespass, or, owners of covers to require compensation for drawing them— a claim that has already been made. In short, sir, I prefer fox-hunting to steeple-racing, and I doubt whether they can flourish together.

THE DUKE.—I was not aware of the circumstances you have now stated to me.

NIMROD.—They are facts, sir. In one of our oldest and most respectable hunts, rent for drawing covers has been demanded and paid; and even the hounds of our king have been warned off a considerable part of the country they hunted, in consequence of the mischief done by the rabble which attended a steeple-chase over it. I dare say your royal highness saw some correspondence on the subject, in the newspapers, between my Lord Errol, the master of the king's buck-hounds, and such owners and occupiers as did not force on the notice.*

THE DUKE.—I do not recollect reading what you allude to, and am sorry to hear it.

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* To prove that my fears as to the prejudicial effect of steeple-racing or fox-hunting, were not groundless, I have only to state that, in an account I have just written of a month's sojourn at Melton Mowbray during the last hunting season, the fact is stated, of there having been no less than ten hunting countries vacant last year, several of which are still without hounds.

Nimrod.—But, sir, I have other objections to these steeple-races, as they are called. In the first place, they are, in most cases, acts of cruelty towards horses, and, as your royal highness must know, several good ones have been already sacrificed to them. (‘Ah! poor Grimaldi!’ exclaimed the prince.) I do not think, sir, we have *a right* to trespass so far on their powers, merely for the sake of money (the prince nodded assent); neither, supposing it to have been intended that a horse should be able to carry a man across a country, and over all feasible obstacles that *may* oppose his course, could it have been intended—inasmuch as his natural powers are unequal to it—that he is to do so *at his full speed, and over every description of ground.* Then, again, sir, I consider fox-hunting not only the noblest and most manly, but the most disinterested diversion that was ever invented for man (the prince again nodded assent); and one of its principal recommendations is, the total absence of all money speculations. But this is not the case with steeple-racing, into which, as I have before observed, in the paper to which your royal highness alludes, roguery has already found its way. It may do better at present for France than for England; because, sir, I presume roguery has not yet found its way into French racing.

THE DUKE (smiling).—Oh! I beg your pardon, Mr. Apperly. We can shew you a little roguery now and then on our turf.

This allusion to the Duke of Orleans, reminds me of the singular fact of his having won the grand prize at Goodwood races of last year, with a horse which his trainer, George Edwards, purchased for his royal highness last summer, picking up the best prize at Boulogne, on his road to Paris; and he has done the same this year on his return. This horse, whose name is Beggarman, was considered quite a second or third-rate racer in England; inasmuch as four hundred guineas was the price given for him, a sum which could not be expected to purchase a good race-horse, especially one combining his powers. Strange to say, the great improvement in Beggarman is attributed by the editor of "*Bell's Life*," whose authority on such matters is generally derived from good sources, to the influence of French air and French training on the stamina of this horse! Now, how far change of air may operate on the constitution of a horse, as we know it does on that of a man, I am unable to say; but French training is the same as English training, and, in the present instance, it was strictly English, being under the eye of one of the cleverest men Newmarket could produce, and who, it is said, as the reward of his winning the Goodwood shield, has had 100*l*. per annum settled upon him for his life by his royal master, who does all things with a spirited and liberal hand.

There is another trifling circumstance relating to this victory on the part of our gallant neighbour, that is not altogether unworthy of remark, chiefly on account of the coincidence which is appended to it. Two years back, I purchased, from the Earl of Jersey, a race-horse called Mendicant, for the Prince of Moskowa, which had almost unprecedented success in winning eleven races at thirteen starts.

CHAPTER VIII.

SPORTING IN FRANCE.

Racing in France—Training establishments of the Duke of Orleans, Lord Henry Seymour, Count Pontalba, &c.—Public trainer—Chantilly—A strange blunder in French training—The Champ de Mars—English jockeys in France—Trotting races—Duke of Orleans—Duke de Guiche—History of racing in France—Advantages of racing—French blunders about horses—French coaching—Numerous accidents—Coursing in France—A French chasseur—The French dog and gun—Dog education in France—The French pointer—His extraordinary docility—An odd mixture—The gun—Its defective construction—French sporting habits—French game laws—French poachers—Liberality of French landowners—Pigeon shooting—Fly-fishing almost unknown in France—English fly-fishers—Musters—Martin Hawke—Lord Elcho—Improved character of English sportsmen.

It may surprise some of my readers to be told of the number of training establishments in the vicinity of Paris, and the large studs to be found in them. The Duke of Orleans, for example, has generally twenty horses in training at Chantilly. The chief sires are Royal Oak, Dangerous, Glaucus, and Priam,—no bad selection.

Lord Henry Seymour comes next, having fourteen of all ages, from five downwards, under the care of Mr. R. Boyce, of Newmarket fame, all claiming Royal Oak, his lordship's own horse, for their sire, with the exception of one two-year-old, by Actæon, and another of the same age, by Terror.

The government, under the head of "*l'Administration Royale des Haras*," has also several horses in training, under the care of Mr. Thomas Robinson (brother to the celebrated James Robinson, of Newmarket celebrity), late rider for Lord Henry Seymour. This is a young stud, but it has had its full share of success.

Monsieur Fasquel, who resides between Chantilly and Senlis, and who combines the characters of miller and sportsman, has also a stud of about twelve, under the superintendence of a trainer and rider of the name of Hardy, well known as a superior jockey on our provincial courses. Hitherto, Monsieur Fasquel's success has not been great, but better doings are expected from the management of Hardy.

Monsieur A. Santerre has a small stud, also in the hands of an English trainer; and Count Pontalba, who resides near Senlis, is "coming on," as the term is, and likely to shine some day. His horses are trained by Mr. C. Carter, brother to Mr. T. Carter, late trainer to Lord Henry Seymour, but who now has the management of Baron Rothschild's stud.

The principal public trainer is Mr. Palmer, late of the Bois de Boulogne, in the neighbourhood of Paris, but who has established himself at Chantilly. He has, at this time, nine race-horses under his care, and he gives very general satisfaction to his employers, among whom is the Prince of Moskowa, a zealous supporter of the French turf.

In the forest of St. Germains, Monsieur

Lupin, and Mr. A. Fould, have good studs of race-horses, the string amounting to eight. And here I may mention a fact, tending to shew that Frenchmen are in earnest in their turf speculations. Monsieur Lupin attended the sale of our royal stud at Hampton-court, and gave, within a fraction, two thousand guineas for three brood mares,—viz., Fleur de Lis, Wings, and Young Mouse! Their produce is just now getting into work, and more promising young ones are not to be found or desired. I saw them at the owner's chateau, near St. Cloud, before they went into training, and found that they were reared in a very proper manner, with a few exceptions, which I took the liberty to correct. The studs of these gentlemen are trained and ridden by a young man of the name of Butler, brother to the Newmarket jockey of that name, and nephew of the Chifneys, of great riding fame.

Monsieur Aumond, residing near Caen, in Normandy, has a long string, and "goes the whole hog," vanning his horses to the different meetings, after the English mode. He won the great prize—the Jockey Club stakes, or French Derby, as it is called—at Chantilly, three years ago. An attempt at disqualification of the winner was made, but it proved groundless, and the stakes have been handed over to Monsieur Aumond. They are worth at least six hundred pounds; and this is a great betting race. On one occasion, when I performed the office of judge, above three hundred thousand francs were dependent on the event. Who would have foretold this twenty years back?

Chantilly may now be called the Newmarket of France, as all the horses formerly trained in the Bois de Boulogne are now trained there. And it was high time such a change should take place, for such ground to train horses upon as "the Wood," as it was called by the fraternity, was never before heard of. Fancy my surprise when, on my first visit to Paris, being whisked along at a good pace in Lord Henry Seymour's coach, through one of the public roads of this wood, I observed, "*What was* *that?*" on seeing something pass the window like a flash of lightning.

"A horse sweating," was the reply.

Then another passed, and another, going a still better pace. Ye gods! thought I, that I should ever see horses trained on a public road! Then the Champs de Mars, a gravelled surface, and, after a wet night, a bed of mud and slush, is the vilest spot ever chosen for a race-course. Chantilly, on the other hand, besides the extreme beauty of its situation, on the border of a fine forest, and commanding a near view of the superb royal chateau, and its stables, unequalled for their architecture, affords a most excellent race-course; and, being on the high road to Paris, every convenience to the frequenters of it is afforded.

It is not very flattering to the present state of our own turf, that so many of our good jockeys are now to be found in France. I can enumerate the following, most of whom are in very good repute, some first-rate: George and Charles Edwards, Thomas Robinson, Flatman, jun., Twitchett, Hardy, young Bloss, Butler, R. Boyce, jun., Smith, White, J. Mezen, Middleditch, &c.

I must here observe, that English grooms, &c., as well as trainers and jockeys, are treated with great kindness by their employers — characteristic, indeed, of the French aristocracy, whose deportment to their domestics reads Englishmen a lesson, as far as humanity and good feeling are concerned.*

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* I know not that I can better illustrate this good trait in the French character than by relating the following simple fact. On the first day of my first appearance at Chantilly races, as I was eating my dinner in a public room, I observed a table laid for three persons in one part of it, and, within a couple of yards of it, a smaller one laid for one person only. Presently in walked a middle-aged, apparently, country gentleman, with his two daughters, elegantly dressed, and sat themselves down at the larger table. No sooner had they commenced their dinner, than a respectable-looking female servant made her appearance, and occupied the seat at the small table. With this distinction, however,—the separate table,—everything appeared in common between them. In fact, the only outward and visible difference of rank and station, between the old housekeeper (if such she were) and the young ladies, barring the small table, was in the gowns they wore, one being of cotton whilst the others were of silk.

Many of the exercise boys are French, and when they commence early, answer the purpose well.

As there are at present as many as twenty places in France where annual races are held, and upwards of a hundred and fifty owners of race-horses, we may fairly presume that, if racing have not as yet taken strong hold on the people, it is progressing in France, and at rather a quick rate. The chief obstacle to it is, the making the people comprehend its legitimate end — the rapid improvement of horses.

A word on trotting racing. No one who knows anything of horses would select a race-course for the display of the trotting pace, the excitement inseparable from it being almost sure to cause some of the horses to break into a gallop. Besides, of all the paces of the horse, fast trotting is the most useless to the generality of French riders, inasmuch as their not rising to the action in their stirrups renders it too fatiguing to endure for any length of time. Indeed, to prevent horses from trotting, they tie their legs in such a form as to cause them to move those on the same side simultaneously, which is contrary to their natural action, but which produces that easy, and for many purposes not to be despised pace, the amble, the maximum rate of which is from five-and-a-half to six miles in the hour. For women, who are indifferent horsewomen, and for invalids of either sex, the amble is a pace that might be encouraged with good effect in all countries.

I had the honour, by the express order of the Duke of Orleans, of accompanying the Count de Gambis, his royal highness's Master of the Horse, to his breeding establishment at Meudon, twelve miles from Paris ; whither we were conveyed in one of his royal highness's open carriages, drawn by four slapping bay geldings, driven by exceedingly well-dressed postillions, who rode in the English style. Our route lay through a highly interesting, as well as extremely beautiful country, diversified with hill, dale, wood, and water, laid out in extensive fields, chiefly meadows, and adorned with villas and villages, situated on the brows of gently swelling hills, which set them off to advantage. The chateau at Meudon, where the paddocks are, was once inhabited by Napoleon.

Since this period, the stud of the Duke of Orleans has been considerably augmented; but from what I saw of his mares, and the good management of the young stock, I hazarded a prediction that future success must attend it; and such has been the case.

It may here be observed, that the Duke de Guiche, who, from his long residence in England, was somewhat *au fait* at such matters, was the original maker of the Meudon stud; and, had it not been for the zeal with which the Duke of Orleans has entered into it, together with the spirited conduct of Lord Henry Seymour, the loss of the said duke, as also the absence from France of Count D'Orsay, would have gone hard towards paralyzing, if not putting an end to French racing. It likewise sustained a heavy blow in the death of Monsieur Rieussec, who was killed in Paris by the infernal machine of Fieschi.

It is not in my power to say what was the first horse-race for money in France, but the following are on record, which cannot be doubted. On the plains of Sablons, in 1776, there took place a match for 2500 francs, between Teucer, the property of the Marquis of Conflans, and Comus, the property of the Count D'Artois, which the former won. Teucer was by Northumberland, by Snip; Comus, by Otho, by Crab. The distance four miles. Other matches followed, between the Duke of Chartres and Major Banks; between the Prince of Nassau and Mr. Fitzgerald; between the Marquis of Conflans and M. de Champreux; between the Count D'Artois and the Duke of Chartres; and between Français, the Prince of Guimeré, and the Duke of Chartres. This last match was for 15,000 francs, or 600*l.* sterling, which may be considered, up to this period, the largest sum run for in France, in what is called a match, or otherwise.

We next find races at Fontainebleau in the same year; when, what is called a *grande poule* (*Anglicé* sweepstakes) was won by the Duke of Chartres's Glowworm, by Eclipse, who beat, on the same day, Lord Claremont's Mareschal, and two others, for the sum of 5000 francs, P. P. (*courrir ou payer.*) As it appears by our stud-book, that Glowworm was foaled in 1773, he must have been only three years old when thus doing honour to his illustrious sire, on French ground.

In the following year, at the above-named place, racing was continued on a small scale; but, as the betting, before and after starting, is named, we may presume it was at this period entered into with spirit amongst the princes, noblemen, and gentlemen, to whom it was of course strictly confined; and, in 1783, in the royal park of Vincennes, during the spring meeting (with the addition of one race in October), no less than fifteen races are recorded. The principal owners were—the Princes of Nassau, Henain, and Guimeré; the Count D'Artois;

the Dukes de Chartres, Fitz-James, and Lauzun; and the Marquis of Conflans; together with three Englishmen of the names of Singleton, Woodward, and Lunn, who appear to have been owners of horses of the best English breed. The greater part of the horses were English, and also of the best blood; but strange to say, when contending against those of French breed, the utmost weight they gave then was only five pounds.

The following sentence at the conclusion of the account of one race, shews that matters were conducted exactly on the Newmarket scale:—"*Le juge n'a placé que ces* 3 *chevaux.*" It will also be apparent, by the selection of the blood or breed by the French sportsmen, namely that of Eclipse, Matchem, Snap, Bay Malton, Turk, Young Cade, Fairy Queen, &c., that they were no bad judges of the sort of horse likely to benefit France, inasmuch as the stock of the above-named racers have been celebrated for stoutness, as well as for speed.

The autumn of this year produced a

meeting at Fontainebleau, where the presence of some of our sporting aristocracy appears to have given a spur to the proceedings, in the amount of money run for. For example:—the then Duke of Queensberry, with a horse called Gonzales, by Herod, out of a sister to Highflyer's dam, beat the Count D'Artois' Young Comus, a match of two miles, for 17,500 francs; and again, the then Lord Derby's King William, by Florizel, out of Milliner, by Matchem (no bad cross), five years old, carrying 119 lbs. beat the Duke of Chartres' Phillis, by Plunder, out of Semele, by Blank, three years old, carrying 107 lbs., in a match for 12,500 francs. Again: Mr. Wyndham's Doctor, seven years old, beat the Duke of Chartres' Lucy Locket, also seven years old, at equal weights, for 400 louis a-side. In fact, the Englishmen won all the races they contended for, as might have been expected in those young days; but it would appear that Lord Derby's King William should have given the duke's Phillis more than 8 lbs.

Other matters than horse-racing having unfortunately occupied the French nation during the remainder of the last century, we hear little more of it until the commencement of the present, and then only on a small scale, and almost exclusively amongst the French themselves, in which case it was not likely to make very rapid progress. The first meeting on the Champ de Mars (Paris), of which I can find an account, was in August, 1819, when three prizes of 1200 francs were run for on the first day by French horses, the property of French gentlemen, amongst whom was Monsieur Rieussec, to whom I have previously alluded, as one of the original and best promoters of the French turf. On the second day, there was only one prize of 2000 francs; and on the 5th of September, one of 4000 francs, both of which were won by Count de Narbonne's Latitat beating and distancing some others. Latitat appears to have been bred in France, but of pure English blood.

In the following year, an Englishman,

named Drake, appears on the Champ de Mars, and wins four races out of seven, in the first October meeting, and Monsieur Rieussec the other three ; and in the second, a circumstance occurred to which I do not recollect a parallel in the racing world : a horse contends with his own sire, who beats him, winning his race in the fourth heat, when all the rest of the horses were drawn.

In the September meeting, 1823, the royal prize of six thousand francs was contended for by a strong field of horses, the Duke de Guiche's mare, Nell, coming in first in both heats. Some crossing and jostling, however, appear to have been practised—the word *interrompu* being prefixed to the names of several of the horses. There being no jockey club in France at this period, the king decided that the mare who ran second was the winner.

Soon after this a Monsieur Crémieux, a Paris horsedealer, was making good way on the French turf, and his death was a loss to it, as he entered into the pursuit with spirit, and was a good judge of horses.

The first notice I can find of Lord Henry Seymour's appearance is at the September (Paris) meeting, 1826, when himself and the Duke de Guiche paid forfeit to a sweepstakes. In the course of the next year, he made some matches with Colonel Charittie, well known on the English turf, which were run on the Bois de Boulogne, and at this period may his lordship's career be said to have commenced. A more successful one is not perhaps on record.

One of the principal advantages which France will derive, in the course of time, from the gradual admixture of pure blood with the native horses of the country, will be the improvement in travelling by land, as well as in the cavalry. Even within the period of my residence here, an alteration for the better has taken place in the post-horses ; but, for the most part, those worked in the diligences are still the low-bred, heavy-moving animals, that have been erroneously considered necessary for the lumbering machines which they draw. A Frenchman will tell you that heavy horses *must* be opposed to heavy weights, and to a certain extent he is right. But although horses draw by their weight, it requires the powerful action of their muscles to keep this weight in motion, and no sooner do they become distressed by their work than this propelling power is rendered nearly powerless, and then the *weight*, so far from being beneficial, has a directly opposite effect.

I am not an advocate for a great increase of speed in the public coaches of France, so long as the present insecure system of harnessing the horses together, with the rotten state of the harness, prevails. I have witnessed too many hairbreadth escapes, even at the present rate, to have any desire to increase it; and the accidents that are on record nearly equal, in extent of injury to life and limb, those on the English railroads.

All that I have seen relating to French coaching, during nearly ten years' residence in the country, induces me to believe that, generally speaking, the French people are the most awkward in the management of horses, in all situations in which they are placed—the military school excepted—of any that have come under my observation, in my varied walk through life. One example will go far to prove my assertion. Where, except in France, will you see a right-handed person sitting on the left hand of his companion in a cabriolet, which is the case with half the persons you meet in such vehicles? And, should the driver of a diligence be left-handed, he invariably sits on the right of his passenger, who, of course, either obstructs the use of his whip, or secures some not very agreeable thumps from the crop of it. And as to stable management, beyond filling their bellies, it gives a Frenchman no concern. The phrase "bad condition," as applied to horses, is not in their vocabulary.

Coursing is little followed in this country; but as a celebrated writer on field sports observes, "There is nothing a Frenchman hates so much as a greyhound, and their laws against them are very severe."*

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* Until last year it was unlawful to take them into the field.

Strange to say, I have never seen what may be called a thorough-bred greyhound bred in France.

I am at a loss to account for all this. I consider France most especially suited to the use of greyhounds, from the champaign nature of the country, abounding as it does in vast plains, with light soil, and having no fences. Add to this, the hares in France are particularly stout, at least in the parts where these plains are, and they may be said to extend over three parts of the kingdom.

Shooting is the favourite out-of-door diversion in France, although several things operate against its being pursued on the grand scale in which it is now so generally followed in Great Britain. First, the law of primogeniture forbids the frequency of such large landed possessions as my countrymen succeed to, and consequently there are, comparatively speaking, few large preserves of game. Secondly, the generally champaign nature of the country, and the absence of small covers, hedgerows, and ditches, are inimical to its safety, where it does exist. Thirdly, the French appear almost regardless of vermin, the chief destroyers of the feathered race. In addition to all this, the non-necessity for a qualification to shoot game, beyond the amount of a few shillings to pay for a *port d'armes*, together with the poaching for the market *at all periods of the year*, render a general abundance of game in France a boon not to be looked for by any considerate person. I will, however, endeavour to describe the French "chasseur," as the *shooting* sportsman is called here.

All countries have their costumes peculiar to themselves, though, generally speaking, those of France and England differ less than those of most other European countries. The French chasseur, however, religiously adheres to his own when he takes the field with his gun. On his head he wears a cap —he would think himself as much out of order in a hat, as the huntsman of the Quorn hounds would without his cap. As he has little cover-hunting, and scarcely any hedges to encounter, his legs are slightly defended, and he generally wears linen trousers; but for the *marais* (the marsh) shooting, he wears the fen boots that draw up nearly to the fork, and are excellently made here. He wears no coat, but a blouse, encircled at the waist by a belt; and over this is slung the *carnassière*, or game-bag. The powder-flask, the shot-belt, and a drop of cognac, are inmates of this bag.

The *chasse*, as every description of field sports is called here, opens sooner or later according to the state of the harvest; and I believe a slight remonstrance on the part of the farmers postpones it for a fortnight; and then adieu to the hopes of the sportsman—in this part of the country at least—as one half of the game is in the market, slily, of course, before the fortnight expires; and what remain are so wild, that it is often useless to pursue them. But why should the latter obstacle exist? I answer, because the corn here is cut so close to the ground, that the game see the approach of the sportsman and his dogs, and they rise out of gunshot; and the absence of turnip crops greatly aggravates the evil.

Pheasants, red-legged partridges, the common partridge, woodcocks, snipes, quails, hares, rabbits, and every description of wild fowl in the winter, are the objects of the chasseur's pursuit. Of course I except the tenants of the forests, with which the generality of chasseurs have nothing to do; and, taken on the whole, there is little inducement to a sportsman who has been accustomed to shoot in England to take the field with his gun, except as a means of exercise. But speaking generally, Englishmen must be forcibly struck with the apparent simplicity of persons of wealth and property in France, contrasted with the lordly notions and aristocratic appearance of their own countrymen similarly circumstanced in life. Whether this excessive refinement be beneficial to us, is a point I am not going to discuss; but the evidence of history is against us. Be this as it may, as far as the active pleasures of life are concerned, the Frenchman is very easily gratified. In short, the horse, the carriage, the dog, and above all, the gun, which satisfies him, would not be esteemed worthy of notice by the Englishman. We will, however, now confine ourselves to those constant companions, the dog and the gun.

In my opinion, every description of sporting should be carried on *upon system;* if not, it is little better than child's play. I admit, however, that in England the breaking of pointers and setters is occasionally pushed to an extreme, if not a useless point: for example, "Juno's bird," "Ponto's bird," and so on. But the down-charge system, of not much more than thirty years' standing, is an unspeakable benefit to the partridge, pheasant, or snipe shooter, and no pointer or setter's education is complete without it. Strange to say, however, this canine accomplishment is very little known in France. At least, I have made many inquiries from the first sportsmen in these parts, but cannot learn that a down-charge dog is to be seen anywhere; neither do letters from friends in distant departments afford one single instance. This, I say, is strange; but it is "passing strange" that few French pointers and setters are taught to back or drop.

I am here compelled to observe, that, in the field, the French chasseur violates the first principles of dog management, by running up to his game when it falls, and encouraging the chasing of wounded hares. Indeed, I am informed by a gentleman who has shot many years in this country, and in a department tolerably well stocked with game, that one of the best recommendations a pointer or setter can have, is to be a good one for wounded hares—the retriever being rarely had recourse to.

The French chasseur also often shoots all he can upon the ground; which is injurious to dogs; and what is more, he shoots at almost everything that comes in his way. I once heard such a succession of shots near to my house, in the month of September, that I was induced to walk out to view the sport. To my surprise, I found two chasseurs, with a brace of good-looking pointers, firing in the teeth of them, *at larks;* nay more, I even saw one of them run before his dog to meet the flight of the bird. The lark, above all other birds not within the pale of game, should never be shot at before pointers or setters, inasmuch as they partake of the game *scent*, and, on bad scenting days, are often sufficiently puzzling to the best broken dogs, in their hunting.

I doubt not there being excellent pointers and setters in France, and especially what are termed single-handed ones. Indeed, I have seen a few who cannot be excelled for steadiness in finding, and in docility in fetching their game; but they are dead slow, being evidently under-bred. French dogs, however, like the horses, are extremely docile, and their want of style in their work is in part made up by docility and cunning.

In many parts of France, where the use of the retriever is unknown, the act of bringing dead game to the sportsman is an indispensable quality in the pointer or setter, as far as the state of the *carnassière* is concerned, and perhaps of equal value with the "down charge." Of course, I do not here altogether allude to partridge-shooting.

I have not seen the true springing spaniel, or cocker, since I have been in France, and I have reason to believe his breed is extremely rare. It is amusing, however, occasionally to see the various description of dog that attends the French chasseur. I once met one of them with whom I was acquainted, and amongst his pointers was what I took to be a turnspit. He informed me he came from Spain, and would find and point game as well as any of his pointers. The gentleman I am alluding to is a sportsman.

We will now proceed to the gun. It may be stated that every time a Frenchman in the provinces shoots, he is in danger of losing life or limb, from the defective construction of his gun. That guns made in the provinces should burst, is to be expected from the extreme lowness of the cost, single-barrelled ones being sold at forty francs each, and double-barrelled ones from eighty to a hundred and twenty-five, or *5l.* sterling! The locks, as may be imagined, are infamous; the barrels not twisted but forged. In short, I have heard of twice as many guns having burst in France, during my residence in it, as in my whole life before.

From the numerous acquaintance I have in the sporting world, it is natural to suppose that I have many shooting acquaintances now residing in this country, and I have applied to some of them for information on this subject. From a letter from one of them—as good a sportsman as ever took a gun in hand, and residing in a well-stocked department—I give the following extract, as the truth of his statement may be relied upon :—

"I have no difficulty," he says, "in answering your questions. The bursting of French guns arises from several causes. First, from the badness of the material of which the barrel is too often, indeed, I may say, generally, made. Secondly, from defects in the calibre, adjoining the breech, which defects existed in the forging of the barrel. I know of three new double guns which were sold by the gunmaker here with the above defects. One has burst and shattered the owner's hand dreadfully, it being almost divided in two; the others will probably burst on the opening of the next year's *chasse*. A French gentleman residing here, with whom I am acquainted, lately purchased what was conceived to be one of the best guns Paris could produce, and, about a fortnight after he received it, it burst in his hand. As I did not examine the gun, I cannot say what occasioned its bursting; I only speak to the fact. Another gentleman, living in this town, has had two French guns burst in his hands since I have been here. A double gun burst a few days since, belonging to a man whom I often meet out shooting, and seriously injured his hand. The gentleman whose hand was divided by the bursting of his gun, had another narrow escape the week before last, by the bursting of his friend's gun."

He afterwards proceeds thus: "The frequency of the bursting of French guns arises from five or six different causes. A principal one, as I before observed, is the extreme smallness of the calibre, combined with the want of cleanliness, as a Frenchman seldom cleans his gun above once in a fortnight. It may surprise you to hear, that I have never met one who thought it necessary to clean it daily, after shooting. You are aware, I am sure, that the resistance or recoil, is proportioned to the smallness of the calibre, and must of course be extremely increased by foulness. I have experienced this with my own guns, which are of very large calibre, at the close of a hard day's shooting. The defects in the calibre, at the breech, I have only noticed in guns of low price; but as I know those of the highest prices do frequently burst, I attribute such accidents to the general smallness of the calibre, and the too great lightness of the barrels. Again: Frenchmen use very improper wadding—brown paper, for example, doubled up in the shape of a cone, the danger of which I need not remind you, particularly with double guns. I only know one or two who ever use the card-cutter. Their charge also differs much from ours, and is at variance with confidence placed in their guns. It is generally a drachm and a half of powder, and three-quarters of an ounce of shot. My charge is, three drachms of powder, and an ounce and quarter of shot, and I could increase this if I wished it. They are very partial to large shot.

"The French gun-locks are, for the most part, infamous. In fact, I have never met with any in these parts, even the highest-priced ones, that are a whit better than the most common ones made in England. And, in other respects, the French chasseur does not give his gun fair play; but here the evil is almost inseparable from shooting with dogs not down to charge. Having shot and *dropped* his game—but this does not follow that he has killed—he at once advances, with his discharged gun, to assist his dog in finding what he has dropped—perhaps a winged bird, or a maimed hare—and, when he has found it, or given over looking for it, he begins to load, having suffered his barrel to get cool and *damp*.

The English shooter (and his dogs) never stirs from the spot till he has reloaded his barrels, when, if his game be wounded, he commences pursuit."

Another of my correspondents on the subject of shooting, writes thus :—" There are several excellent shots in my neighbourhood, and if they did but understand the system of dog-breaking—*to be steady to the gun as well as to their game*—they would commit great slaughter. There are some good useful pointers in this neighbourhood, but slow, and not one down to gun. Frenchmen will not take pains to break their dogs as we do in England, nor do they pay half so much attention to their breed. A pointer is a pointer, a setter a setter. They are also careless in hunting their dogs, not giving them the wind, nor making them quarter their ground properly.

" Of course you are aware of the laws relating to game, which are but few. One point, however, is worth relating, because it is in honour of the French Government, and shews that they do not wish to extract 'the pound of flesh.' If your gun is taken from you by the police, owing to your committing a breach of these laws, it is given up to you on your presenting *a* gun, of ever so inferior a description. In another respect, however, the mildness of these laws operates injuriously to the sportsman who chiefly shoots for diversion; I mean, their allowing every vagabond who can muster fifteen francs permission to carry his gun, who, of course, takes every unfair advantage over the game. From this cause, and the legal and illegal sale of it—at all periods of the year—it is annually decreasing in most parts of France. Then, half the lower orders in these parts are poachers, and could give lessons to some of our first-rate English hands in this profitable traffic."

The writers of the foregoing extracts concur in expressing their high sense of the kindness and liberality of the different proprietors over whose land they have sported; and one of them refers me to a letter from the late Lord Harley, wherein he instances a friend of his, who scarcely missed a day in the season without taking the field with his gun, having been only once "pulled up" for trespass, and even then he might have been let off by a trifling apology, which, John Bull like, he refused to make. I am here compelled to say, that Monsieur *le chasseur Français* in England, would have been "pulled up" much oftener, unless some extraordinary good fortune attended him.

Pigeon shooting is carried on upon a large scale in the Tivoli Gardens, in Paris. It is one of those modern innovations on legitimate sporting, which I could never bring myself to approve of; and were I to require an argument against it, on the score of *wanton* cruelty, I should find it in the fact of the almost incredible number of a hundred and ninety thousand pigeons having been let out from the traps in these gardens alone, since the year 1831. This exhibition was founded by an Englishman of the name of Bryon, who is the publisher of the French "Racing Calendar," and I received from him the following curious facts : — "At its commencement, sixteen poor peasants were employed to bring the birds from Normandy and Picardy, travelling on foot with their dossers (hottes) on their backs. They are now enabled, by the liberal reward of their labours, to convey them to the amount of two thousand per week, in well appointed carriages, drawn by horses of their own."

To this extent, may some good be said to arise out of evil. And one more benefit has sprung out of this mania for pigeon shooting ; it has created a great improvement in gun-making, and has been the cause of one of the first artists in that line in London transferring his business to Paris, where I have reason to believe he has met with much encouragement ; and no doubt Paris gunmakers have taken a leaf out of his book.

By all I have seen, or can learn, the French generally do not excel in fly-fishing ; and, to a certain extent, I form my opinion from the fact of my spending a day last spring, when the May-fly was on the water, in a large village, through which a good trout-stream runs, but in which village such a thing as an artificial fly could not be procured; and those which I have seen of French make, I considered very indifferent indeed. The use of the net is well understood in France, and a most destructive engine is it in a Frenchman's hands; but I question whether a Musters, a Martin Hawke, or a Lord Elcho, could be found this side the Channel, amongst the aristocracy, or elsewhere — combining science with practice, and thereby ensuring success, unless when forbidden by the elements.

I now conclude my remarks on sporting in France, of which I have chiefly spoken from my own personal knowledge, and consequently have omitted the hunting of the boar and the chevreuil, which continues to be practised in some parts of the country. That sporting may be encouraged in France, should be the prayer of every Frenchman who wishes well to his country, and he may look to England for the exemplar. With us—and why should it be otherwise with them?—the sportsman of the present day is, generally speaking, a man of liberal education, and ideas enlarged by cultivation and travel; his conversation is not, as formerly, confined to the pedigree of a horse, or a detail of a race or a chase; but he is enabled to deliver a sound opinion on most subjects that are started, and unites to the enthusiasm of a lover of the chase or the trigger, the polished manners of a gentleman, and the social and kind feelings of a friend.

CHAPTER IX.

SPORTING IN GERMANY.

Fondness of the Germans for horses—Extent of breeding establishments in Germany—Count de Plessen of Avenach—Baron Biel—His plan of disseminating English racing blood through Germany—Count Hahn of Basedow—Reception and serenade of Basedow—The mansion, stables, and kennels—A boar-hunt—A fox-chase—A splendid shot—English trainers — Baron Biel — Difficulties of training in Germany—Superb stables—The duke and the horse-breeder—The corn-laws—The wild boar of Germany—Residences of the German nobles—Count Bassewitz—Count Voss—His style of living—Count de Plessen—His deer-park and stud—Seat of Count Veltheim — Extraordinary shot—The Duke of Nassau.

Perhaps the most horse-loving country in Europe is Germany; and there is no other country where the class of persons who form the majority of horse-breeders—namely, the proprietors and cultivators of the soil—so much resemble those of England in their general habits and pursuits. I spent two months in this country, and, with the exception of a fortnight at Doberan during the races, I spent my time in the houses of seven sporting noblemen, all engaged on the German turf, as well as in breeding horses for various other purposes.

The extent to which operations of this kind are carried on may be guessed at from the following brief conversation :—

" How many horses of his own breeding has the count at this time in his stables ?" said I to a servant of the Count de Plessen, of Avenach.

" He has *only* a hundred at present," was the reply ; " but at his father's death our stud consisted of twenty stud horses, and one hundred and thirty brood mares, which, with colts and fillies of various ages, made the sum total rather more than four hundred."

"How many *cows* does the count keep?" was my next question.

"Why," replied my informant, who was in the capacity of what is called bailiff with us, "in consequence of the great number of horses, and our large flock of sheep, we have only thirteen hundred cows at present!"

The number of sheep I found amounted to fifteen thousand; but, if Tacitus is to be credited, the Germans have ever been famous for immense herds of cattle, and their country may be considered a second Epirus, as far as the number of its horses are concerned.

The Iphitus of Germany is the Baron Biel, of Zierow, near Wiemar, to whom the credit is due of introducing pure English blood, and consequently racing, into his country. Being united to an English lady, his intercourse with England, and his perfect familiarity with our language, enabled him to initiate himself into some of the most important mysteries of horse-racing, as well as the means by which success can be obtained—namely, the selection of the best blood, coupled with the most approved system of rearing thorough-bred stock; and, by the assistance of Messrs. Tattersall, and other friends, he imported into his own country as many mares, accompanied by two or three entire horses, as soon formed a stud.

But the wide dispersion of this pure blood was next to be accomplished, without which the baron was aware racing could never be established, inasmuch as it would be vain to imagine that the native horse of the country could compete with the produce of his stud. He, therefore, took the following unique step to complete the object of his wishes: He advertised an annual sale of the *produce* of his mares, to take place almost a month before the time they were expected to foal; and although it was somewhat on the system of counting the chickens before they are hatched, customers were not wanting, at about an average price of sixty guineas per produce.

The baron acted in the most straight-forward way in the conducting of those sales. The produce was arranged in lots; tickets describing the sire and dam of each were put into a bag; and after he himself had drawn out six lots, the rest were offered to the public, to be delivered when weaned. It is therefore quite evident that this method of sale was attended with considerable risk, if not disadvantage to the baron, as a breeder of race-horses, with the intention of training them; inasmuch as it was within the range of possibility that he might have drawn the six worst lots out of the bag, and left all the best for his competitors at a distant day. Policy, as well as justice, however, led him to this determination, and on a closer view it will appear that he took the right course.

As things were, with his English experience, Baron Biel's success at the commencement of German racing was, and even up to the present period has been, great; but had he, in the first instance, kept a reserve at his sales, he would have secured the advantage amongst his countrymen, whenever he met them on a race-course. I have no hesitation then in saying, that future ages will honour Baron Biel for the benefit he has bestowed upon his native country.

The advantages of racing, when honourably conducted, have been duly acknowledged in all countries, and in all ages. Previously to the admixture of English pure blood, the German horses were ill calculated for very fast work, although in many points, where strength alone is wanted, they were excelled by none. At the present day, however, speed with strength is required of the horse, for the greater part of the purposes to which he is applied, and I am at a loss to conjecture why, in a country like Germany, horse-racing had been hitherto so entirely neglected. Its horse-loving people must have been aware, that to the influence of racing are the English indebted for the superiority of their breed, now unrivalled in the world; for, although the Arabians and other eastern nations furnished them with the blood, they made the race-horse.

As may naturally be supposed, some time elapsed before the German sportsmen, having too much reliance on *strength*, and the dubious blood of their own studs, could satisfy themselves that, with *one* cross of English pure blood, they could not contend with the English racer whose blood could be traced to the highest source. But the salutary lessons they received from the baron on that subject, at length had the desired effect; and I have reason to believe that, at the present time, no horse, with German blood in his veins, ever shews upon a German or Prussian race-course, against those of pure English breed.

The nobleman who, next to Baron Biel, took up, and has continued the turf with most spirit and success, is the Count Hahn, of Basedow, whom I visited when in Germany; and when I say that he has an income of eighteen thousand pounds a year, (equal to fifty in England) it may be imagined that he entered into it with spirit. I consider that he has at this time the largest, if not the very best stud in his country, and the prices he has given for English mares and horses entitle him to such eminence.

My first arrival at Basedow was under peculiarly gratifying circumstances. The count, myself, and two friends, had visited a neighbouring nobleman—Count Voss—who married the count's sister; and, at six o'clock in the morning, we proceeded from the one mansion to the other in his large four-oared boat, which was waiting on the lake to convey us thither—distance ten miles. The scenery was delightful; and as I was in anticipation of seeing a kind of sport I had never before witnessed (boar-hunting), I felt more than usually gratified by everything I saw and heard. The extreme kind-heartedness of the count, also, greatly enhanced the pleasure of the day; and he left nothing undone that could contribute to make our visit agreeable to us.

After a little more than an hour's sail down the lake, we arrived at a village on its banks, two miles from the house; and at this village we had an unexpected pleasure.

As we approached the shore, we perceived ten of the count's gamekeepers, all in uniform, each with a French horn in his hand ; and, as we landed, they struck up a salute, the effect of which was increased by the peculiarity of the *locale.* The lake was in front of them ; a small village on one side, the inhabitants of which had turned out on the occasion ; and in the background was a wood of immense extent, through the openings of which the windings of the horns were distinctly heard to penetrate into its inmost recesses. The wood was likewise to be the scene of our sport for the day, and reported to abound with wild boars. Here horses were waiting for us, and in a quarter of an hour we were at our breakfast at Basedow.

I do not attempt a minute description of Basedow. My readers can imagine the sort of house which would suit a German nobleman, having the income I have stated. The mansion alone is of prodigious size, but the adjoining houses, occupied by the vassals of the family, together with the fine old church, stables, barns, kennels, and all necessary buildings, give the whole the appearance of a village of more than ordinary extent. The house claims considerable antiquity, and the walls are indented by sundry cannon-balls, directed against them in the "thirty years' war." The suites of rooms are handsome, and some of them very tastefully fitted up; and I am told Basedow is considered one of the most comfortable *winter* residences in that part of the world.

The vast mansion, however, was not considered sufficiently capacious for the reception of Count Hahn's friends in the hunting-season. He was, at the period of my visit, building several small houses, for the accommodation of such of the unmarried ones as his own would not contain, together with stabling for their hunters and carriage horses; for in Germany there is no sending horses to inns, in the neighbourhood of gentlemen's seats.

The kennel contained a pack of fox-hounds, a pack of boar-hounds, some excellent Russian pointers and setters, which I saw at work, and about thirty bulldogs were to be seen in different parts of the premises. But it was the boar-hounds that chiefly attracted my notice. There were twenty-two couples of these ferocious animals in the kennel, several of them bearing honourable scars, from fierce combat with their savage game, and each was chained to the wall, at such a distance from his neighbour as to prevent them from doing injury to each other. The kennel was a long building, and as these animals were confined in rows opposite to each other, I passed from one end to the other of it, between them, and, to my surprise, not one of them even growled at me ; on the contrary, several seemed desirous of being better acquainted, but I modestly declined the honour.

I do not recollect to have met with any description of the true boar-hound, but he does not appear to me to have any specific character. The pack I allude to seemed to be a cross of the old mastiff, now become so rare with us, and the lurcher greyhound ;

but with more power than belongs to either, individually. Some of these struck me as the strongest animals of the dog variety that I had ever seen, and every one must be aware that, without great strength and undaunted courage, they could not encounter the game they are called upon to pursue.

For the first day's diversion with these hounds, toils were set round a wood for at least half a mile, and forty-five keepers, thirty-four of them in their green livery, were in the field—besides the master of the woods and forests to the count, mounted on a clever Cossack horse, and under whose command all the keepers appeared to be placed. There were, in short, more than a hundred persons employed in preparation for our day's sport; but the upshot was, only one boar run down, which I had the honour, when brought to bay, to despatch with my *couteau de chasse*, having been called upon by the count to do so.

We then went out with the fox-hounds; but although we had a pretty find, and a beautiful crash in the cover, the heat of the midday sun destroyed the chance of catching a fox, if he once got fairly away.

I saw one splendid shot made this day by a keeper. A roe-deer was throwing herself into cover, when he shot her dead whilst in the act of bounding into the bushes; and, to my surprise, his gun was loaded with common shot.

As may be supposed, in these early days of German racing, all the count's trainers and jockeys were English, although there were a few German boys riding exercise.

Zierow, the seat of Baron Biel, is situated within about two miles of the Baltic sea, on the shore of which—although not on sand—is his training-ground, one side of it, indeed, being within a stone's throw of the water. Hither I repaired one day, for the purpose of throwing my leg over one of the horses I was to ride at the forthcoming Doberan races, just to feel his mouth in his gallop; and, having mounted him in his clothes, started, the third in the string. We had not proceeded half a mile, when the horse just before me, which Webb, the baron's trainer and jockey, was riding, bolted for the sea; and the water being shallow, galloped for at least two hundred yards before he fell. Webb being undermost, and not immediately making his appearance, I pulled up my horse, with a view of rendering him assistance, if unable to extricate himself from his rather perilous situation; but soon had the pleasure of seeing him walk towards the shore, apparently none the worse for his ducking.

The scene, however, did not end here. Anglo-Arabian (for that was the colt's name, although we, of course, re-christened him Neptune) went straight out to sea, with the baron at his heels, he having stripped and given chase, with a hope of being able to head him. This, however, he could not do; and as the colt was encumbered with a full suit of clothes, I would not have given much for his life. Strange to say, after being nearly half an hour in the sea, he approached the shore exhausted, and landed on a rock, a few yards from the shore, whence he was conveyed to his stable, with no other injury than a small cut on one heel.

Webb, the baron's trainer, gave me to understand that he had a good deal to contend with, beyond the usual difficulties attending bringing race-horses to the post in his own country, and amongst them the climate was a principal one. For at least two months, in Germany, the frost is very severe indeed, and the springs are colder and later than those we generally experience in England; consequently, race-horses get more flesh than they should do in the winter, and are too often obliged to be hurried in their work, to prepare them for the forthcoming race-meetings. Neither is the hay by any means of a quality equal to that which our English race-horses eat, and for this reason:—it is for the most part the produce of low meadows, imperfectly drained, and, as it is housed in barns instead of being secured in ricks, it does not undergo the process of fermentation sufficiently to make it nutritious and sweet-savoured as our hay is. This being the case, the horses eat more corn than is beneficial to them; and as a substitute for good hay, and to guard against the effects of the increased quantity of oats, bran mashes are too often had recourse to. The foals are also dropped late, on account of the severity of the springs, which is a bar to bringing them on forward in their work.

The stables of Baron Biel, however, like those of his lamented brother, who resided at Wietendorf, two miles distant from Zierow, and was equally devoted to breeding thorough-bred stock, gave every facility to promote the well-doing of race-horses, under these disadvantages. The stables at Wietendorf, indeed, might be called superb; and when I state the fact that His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge dined and sat six hours in them, when every stall was occupied, I think they are entitled to the epithet.

One more word touching his royal highness, the son of whom his royal father said, that "although he had reached his thirtieth year, he had yet to commit his first fault." It happened that the duke attended the

New Brandenburg races, mounted on an exceedingly fine English horse, which attracted the notice of a Mr. Pogge, a wealthy yeoman in the neighbourhood, a breeder and enthusiastic admirer of horses, who, not knowing his royal highness, went up to him, and addressed him thus :—

"You have a very clever horse under you, sir."

"Yes," replied his royal highness, with the characteristic good humour of his family ; "I never saw but *one* in my life that was cleverer."

"Pray, sir, to whom may *he* belong?" added Mr. Pogge.

"To my brother," replied the duke.

"And who is your brother?" resumed Mr. Pogge.

"*The King of England*," answered his royal highness.

Now it so happened that this horse-loving yeoman was of opinion, that there was no sovereign upon earth—neither were all the Cæsars put together—at all to be compared with the then King of England, George IV., because he was a breeder of race-horses, and known to be, like himself, passionately fond of them. His consternation, then, on finding with whom he had been holding this very familiar parley, may be more easily imagined than described.

Although Baron Biel may be considered a small farmer for Germany; still, as I counted in his stables 26 cart-horses, and 44 working oxen; in his cow-stalls, 80 milch cows and 40 fatting oxen; and in his fields, were upwards of 4000 Merino sheep; he may be said to be rather an extensive agriculturist in any country. But my object in alluding to him in this capacity, is only for the purpose of bringing before my readers a fact, which it would be well if it were more considered than it is in these innovating times, when the very foundations of British prosperity are threatened with destruction. I now allude to the corn-laws, and the partial cry for their repeal.

On my expressing surprise to the baron, that I had not seen above a score fields of wheat between Hamburg and his house, he replied, that my surprise would cease when he told me that the current price of that grain was then only from 1*s*. 8*d*. to 2*s*. per Winchester bushel; consequently, it did not remunerate the grower. The baron was distilling his into brandy, and feeding oxen on the refuse of it. Oats were worth no more than eight shillings per English quarter, and barley about the same price. These were the prices of the year I am alluding to, at a place within fifty-six miles of the seaport town of Hamburg, and still less from Lubeck!

No doubt the badness of the roads in this part of Germany had much to do with the above prices of corn; and I found the want of water-carriage through the interior of the country operated greatly against the value of everything relating to land. Amongst other fine woods, of great extent, on Count Hahn's estate, he told us he had one, of a million square roods of ground, full of the finest oaks and pines, but that they were nearly valueless to him, from the want of water-carriage.

It is scarcely necessary minutely to describe the wild boar of Germany, as I conclude he resembles that of most other countries. His colour is a kind of iron-gray, his snout much longer than that of the common hog, his ears comparatively short. His tusks are most formidable weapons, particularly so from the immense power he possesses in the muscles of his neck; and when we consider what a remorseless animal he is—how he roots up everything that comes in his way—it may create surprise that there should have been more than a hundred and fifty of these animals at large on Count Hahn's estates alone. Perhaps this accounts for some German noblemen being such extensive agriculturists, for few tenants would be found willing to grow crops for these animals to devour, and one boar will make sad havoc amongst grain or potatoes in the course of a single night.

Perhaps a short notice of the style of house occupied by the distinguished sporting noblemen whom I visited in Germany, may be interesting to those of my readers who may not have rambled through that peaceful, pastoral, and truly hospitable country. Those of Baron Biel and his brother were of modern erection, and quite after English plans. That of Count Hahn, as I have already said, has more the appearance of a village than a house, and is of immense dimensions. There was one peculiarity in the domestic economy of it which I think is deserving of imitation in the houses of our wealthy aristocracy. No outward door is locked at night; but a watchman is employed to see that all is safe, and, when not in the interior, he is employed in walking round the dwelling, sounding his horn every half-hour.

The mansion of the elder Count Bassewitz seemed to me to be about as large as our Bedlam; but its appearance did not please me so much as that of Count Voss, situated in the same neighbourhood. It is one of great size, and beautifully situated on the bank of a very extensive lake. The count is not a breeder of race-horses, but, in all other respects, he is one of the best sportsmen and horsemen in all Germany; and of extremely elegant manners. His style of living, indeed, and especially as regarded his servants, was more in accordance with the best English style than any other which I witnessed amongst his compeers.

An evening passed very pleasantly under his roof, concluded with a rubber at whist, and a sort of divertisement new to me. About ten o'clock, while the moon was shining brightly on the silvery surface of a fine lake on his grounds, the count and one of his footmen played several airs on the French horn, on its banks, the echo of which had an enchanting effect. A considerable time after the notes of the instrument ceased, the responses, dying away in the distance, fell with inexpressible sweetness on the ear.

The mansion of the Count de Plessen is on a still larger scale. The approach to it is through a noble avenue of oaks; and—the first I had seen in Germany—a deer-park adorned the domain. Whether it be that we are accustomed to see it in England, I know not, but it appears to me that the seat of an English nobleman actually requires this splendid appendage; and when we think of the name bestowed upon it by antiquity, it can scarcely be purchased at too high a price.* In this park the timber is particularly fine; it contains a piece of water four miles in circumference; and a good herd of party-coloured deer. Neither was the sight of one hundred horses in condition—that is to say, with sleek coats, and in body-clothes—by any means an uninteresting one; and these were exclusive of the race-horses in training, and seven or eight stud-horses, fifty-four brood mares, and about two hundred unbroken young ones in the paddocks.

Although we thought we had already seen the *ne plus ultra* of residences considered fitting for noblemen in this part of the world, the grandest of all was in reserve for us as we passed through Prussia, on our departure from New Brandenburg races; namely, that of Harbke, in the neighbourhood of Brunswick, the seat of the Count Veltheim,* as zealous a sportsman as ever went into the field, and a most enthusiastic admirer of horses. The mansion is of great antiquity—the date under the family arms, which are richly displayed over the door, appearing to be 1480. The very great number of buildings which are attached to it, added to a village within a stone's throw containing a thousand inhabitants—all tenants of the count's—gave a still greater importance to the scene; and, taking it as a whole, the imagination cannot devise, or the ambition of man desire, a more complete baronial residence.

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* Παραδεισος. Tissaphernes, to shew his opinion of the elegance of Alcibiades' taste, gave this name to the park which belonged to him. It was planted with stately forest-trees of every kind, well watered, and stocked with abundance of wild animals.

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* Count Veltheim is well known to a great part of the British sporting world by his letters on horses in the "Old Sporting Magazine"—the best on that subject that ever came under my notice. He it was who first directed my attention to Germany as a horse-breeding country.

Not only is the house on a stupendous scale, but, what I did not find to be generally the case—at least to the extent we witness it in my own country—the grounds about it are remarkably well kept; abounding in a rare assortment of ornamental timber, and shrubs of all sorts and descriptions. Amongst other exotics, was a tulip-tree of immense size, bearing occasionally as many as five hundred flowers. There were the *quercus palustris*, the *quercus rubra*, and the American oak, all in high perfection. There were also the Hungarian oak, and maples of prodigious size for their growth, which did not exceed forty years. In fact, there was much about this fine seat which pleased me greatly. First, its antiquity, yet its perfect repair; and the broad, clear moat, that washed its walls, and in which the very swans, gliding majestically on its surface, appeared to feel a conscious pride. Secondly, there was much of the old style of country living, which unfortunately has, in my own country, almost entirely yielded to modern refinement, the change not being for the better. The offices, also, were filled with well-dressed domestics, apparently enjoying themselves at their ease; and the size of the brewhouse and its vats shewed there was good cheer where it ought to be. Another emblem of rural simplicity, was the tolling of the curfew, at five in the morning, to remind the labouring part of the community that it was time to rise; and at six, to dismiss them from their labour. Lastly, the Château-la-Rose, fifteen years in bottle, was most superlatively fine of its kind.

Count Veltheim is a great agriculturist.

"Pray, count," said I to him, "how did the French treat you, when they had possession of your country?"

"They took sixty-five of my best horses," he replied; "and myself and my tenants kept ten thousand of their men for five years!"

I now forget how long he had the honour of having seventeen French officers at his table, but I think it was for nearly the whole of the above period.

On my asking the count if he had pheasants in his woods, one of which, near to his house, contained five thousand English acres, he said he had none, considering them a species of game too tame and domesticated for a real sportsman. His game was the stag of the forest, the roebuck, and the wild boar, with *every thing else that is wild.* He told me he spent some portion of every year with a friend in a distant part of the country, who has thirty thousand acres of woodland, well stocked with all sorts of game, and where his brother had, a short time back, performed the extraordinary feat of killing two stags at a double shot.

On my road home, I was shewn the seat of another illustrious sportsman—the Duke of Nassau. At the period I am speaking of, the zeal of the duke outheroded Herod. He rose at two o'clock in the morning, in the summer-months, to commence the business of the day, a practice which, I was given to understand, was but little relished by some of his sporting friends.

My object in visiting Germany was to ride two of Baron Biel's horses for the two royal prizes at Doberan, given by the amiable and beautiful Alexandrine, then hereditary but now Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, daughter of the King of Prussia, and mother of the Duchess of Orleans. The prize was to be contended for by gentlemen-riders, after the fashion of my own country, and I was fortunate in riding the winners of both.

CHAPTER X.

SPORTING IN GERMANY.

Baths of Doberan—Royal visitors—Grand Duke of Mecklenburg—Duke of Lucca—An English drag—Two sporting princes—A brace of dairy-maids—Use and abuse of the manège—Count Veltheim—Eclipse — Qualities of German horses — Count Voss's trotting mare—German hunters—Mistakes about shoeing—Cause of the foot failing—High keep and pace—English stable servants in Germany—Agriculture in Germany—The yeomen of Germany—Primitive manners — A patrician farmer—The corn-laws—Stag and fox-hunting in Germany—Count Plessen—Reverence for storks—Paucity of people — Breeding stud of King of Prussia — A perfect Arabian — Anecdote —The horse or the prince? — Buckfoot and Boran — Singular stable costume.

Doberan ranks high amongst the numerous watering-places in Germany, and in the season is usually crowded with kings, queens, princes, princesses, and nobles. I never, until this occasion, had the honour to find myself seated amongst reigning sovereigns and princes ; but there was no lack of them here, although not so abundant as in the previous year, when three *kings* were among the throng. I had the honour of being introduced to several of those present at the time to which I allude ; amongst the number was the late Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, related to our own royal family, who, to shew his regard for my countrymen, attracted my notice to the buttons on his coat, which were those of our royal yacht-club.

The Duke of Lucca—a descendant of the proud Porsenna, who had the boldness to dictate to the Roman empire—and the son of the King of Etruria, who was dethroned by Bonaparte, were also of our party ; and having had the honour of driving the latter to the race-course, on the box of Baron Biel's English *drag*, I persuaded his highness to give a good price for the four horses, harness and all, which he sent to his own country. A correspondent to the "Old Sporting Magazine" stated his having seen this team looking very well in the ducal stud in Lucca, two years afterwards, four more English horses having been purchased to match them.

But the two great personages with whom I was best acquainted were his Serene Highness the Duke of Holstein Augustenburg, and his brother, the Prince Frederick, two as zealous sportsmen as the world has ever seen. I used to spend some hours daily in their apartments; was pressed to visit them in Holstein; and two years afterwards, received from each of them a very kind letter written in excellent English. The chief purport of these letters was to tell me how these two illustrious persons had succeeded in establishing four race-meetings in their country, and likewise to inform me of the state of their respective studs. The duke's letter also contained two requests—one of which created a smile: he wished me to send him a couple of young hare-hounds, and *a brace of Cheshire dairy-maids!*

Prince Frederick is a good horseman, having been, as he informed me, instructed in the art by the Earl of Lichfield, when he hunted the Atherstone county; and his highness is an amateur jockey in Holstein.

On my asking his highness if he was fond of fox-hunting, he replied he was "made for fox-hunting"—adding, that he so much enjoyed the noble sport, that he should like to spend his winters in England for that purpose.

Generally speaking, I did not think the Germans good horsemen. They make too much use of the sharp curb and their spurs, pulling their horses about in a strange manner, and destroying their natural gait: too many of them, indeed, appeared to think that prancing and capering should be substituted for it; which is quite contrary to our notions. Such action may be suited to a *spectacle* or to parade; and most ancient writers on the horse recommend the use of the *manège*, for the purpose of creating this unnatural action; but it should not be carried too far, inasmuch as all muscular exertion, not natural, is painful, and consequently difficult to endure. Xenophon's notion of the freedom of a horse's action is very near the mark :—Ταγε μην γονατα ην Βαδιξων ο πωλος υγρως καπτη.

Count Veltheim remarked to me, that he considered our English breeders of race-horses had sacrificed what he termed activity to speed. This is not the case: our swiftest horses possess what alone can be considered good action—namely, that which propels the body with the least apparent excess of muscular exertion, and as little as possible of motion which does not exclusively lead to that end. All roundabout action of the limbs materially diminishes speed; but, nevertheless, the fore-knee must be well bent in the gallop. The count was also in error on another point. He considered that we prefer the long, thin neck, with sharp and lofty withers. This is by no means the case. The neck of a race-horse can scarcely be too short—the length of his frame being in his shoulders and hinder quarters. For my own part, I have seen very few good horses, for any purpose, with long rainbow necks, and such form is indicative of roaring. As for withers, they cannot be too strong, provided they incline horizontally to the chine. It is stated that a firkin of butter was put to stand on those of Eclipse, when he was full of flesh. At all events, the strength and position of the withers is a most material point of the horse, in reference to power combined with speed and safety.

Of the indigenous German horses, my opinion is soon told. I considered the cart-horse for the most part superior to ours, for all common purposes, because not so heavy, but inferior to the Cleveland bay, or Suffolk punch. The coach-horse, although a very useful animal, is not so well bred, nor so good looking, as the better sort of English coach-horse, and I suppose I must have seen some of the best of them in the capital of the country which I visited. Of the saddle-horses, I cannot say a great deal from my own personal experience of them ; but those which I rode—about a dozen in all, and belonging to persons who would, of course, have the best of their kind—had superior action, and were very safe on their feet.

As for the trotting mare of Count Voss, a real Mecklenburger, I never saw her superior; and had she been in England, money might have been safely betted upon her, *after trial of her speed*—which generally precedes all trotting-matches against time—because nothing could make her break into a gallop.

Of the German hunter I am also ill qualified to speak with decision, because those which I saw in the field were crossed with English blood; but had I been commissioned to purchase some promising young horses, to carry not more than twelve stone to hounds, I could have picked from twenty to thirty German-bred ones, out of different studs, which, previous to trial, would not have disgraced any Melton man's stable or his judgment. They came under the denomination of three-parts blood, possessing great freedom of action, with good flat legs, and apparently the best of tempers, considering the pampered state in which those intended for the market were kept. I certainly regretted that I could not, by some magical aid, have transported one four-year-old to my own stable, his price being only sixteen pounds, because he had a trifling blemish. He appeared to have all the qualities of a hunter.

I have at present only one more circumstance to mention connected with German studs, and it is one of considerable interest. The diseases of the feet in England are chiefly attributed to bad shoeing. In the face of high authorities, I have already doubted the truth of this generally received opinion, and my visit to Germany greatly increased my doubts. Mr. Tattersall and myself saw scores of horses with deformed and diseased feet, which had never known a shoe; and to that circumstance alone—for I consider shoeing and the necessary preparation of the foot to be beneficial—was the cause of the disease to be attributed. It is the pace—the "killing pace"—and high keep, that produce diseased feet.

I never in my life saw worse shoeing than that of the German post-horses ; still, in a journey of upwards of a thousand miles, I scarcely observed a lame one, unless worn out by hard work and old age. But German post-horses neither go the pace nor eat the corn that ours do, and consequently their feet, like those of French horses, very seldom fail.

Respecting English servants in the establishments of German sportsmen, I found them generally well pleased with their situations, although I could not help pitying one of them, who had the care of the stud of the elder Count Bassewitz ; for, with very little knowledge of the language of the country, he had all German boys in his stables. As may be expected, awkward mistakes would sometimes occur. For example : the person of whom I am speaking, on his first arrival by diligence at the neighbouring town, inquired the distance to his master's house. He was told it was two miles, and, out of respect to his master, and as night was approaching, he was offered the use of a horse.

"By no means," replied the trainer and jockey; "if it is only two miles, the walk will do me good after my journey." They were German miles, which made ten English ones!

Of the agriculture of Germany at the period I allude to, I have only to observe that, steady to the soiling system — the system alone by which land receives a proper return from its produce—it so far met with my approbation. In other respects, it was behindhand with our own; but doubtless it has "marched" with the times, and would march "double quick" should our corn laws be repealed. When at the races of New Brandenburg, however, I saw a great, an almost incredible number of private carriages, drawn by four horses, which I was informed were the property of men coming under the denomination of our gentleman farmer or yeoman. In several cases, a foal or two would accompany the carriage, the dam or dams being in the team. This had a curious appearance, but there was something of a pastoral as well as primitive character about it, that much took my fancy.

Of patrician agriculturists I can give a little anecdote, shewing, not so much to what extent they carried it, as to what account they may have turned it.

"You farm largely, I suppose?" said I to Count Bassewitz the younger, as we approached his mansion on horseback.

"Pretty well," he replied.

"How many cows do you keep?" resumed I.

"About three hundred and fifty," was the reply.

Seeing a large herd at a distance, I asked him if they were his. He answered in the affirmative. Presently we met another herd on the road, consisting of about a hundred.

"Are *these* yours?" said I.

Looking at them for some time, he replied, "I do not know;" but turning his head round to his groom, asked him the question.

"Yeau, Graff," said the groom.

On looking into one of his stables, and

seeing three horses in body clothes, I asked to what purpose they were put.

"They are my steward's horses," answered the Count. Perhaps *he* could have distinguished the Count's cows from his neighbours'.

On another occasion I was condoling with this sporting Count, on the almost certain prospect of three hundred acres of his wheat being spoiled by rain, when he answered me, *à la John Bull*, "I don't care a d—n; it is worth nothing; I am only sorry for the *straw*."

Repeal our corn laws, and the Count's note would be changed.

Agriculture, however, is held in high estimation by the Germans, as indeed it has ever been by all sensible persons. Being, as Columella says of it, closely allied to true philosophy, it has been the resource to which eminent men in all ages have recurred, in order to amuse the leisure hours of a retired life; and the case here alluded to—that of the Count and his cows—is only one amongst the many wherein the love of horses and hounds has become the ruling passion of the human mind, to the exclusion of some others.

I now bid adieu to German sportsmen. Had I no local attachment, and could speak their language, I should like to live amongst them, because they so much resemble my own countrymen in their pastimes and pursuits. I would do all in my power to encourage stag hunting in their country, to which it is well suited; but, from the great size of its woods, it is not adapted to fox hunting; although the late Count de Plessin kept fox-hounds for more than fifty years.

The reverence of the people for the stork is typical of their primitive character, to which I have already alluded. It would be considered a profane, if not an impious act, to offer violence to these birds, one of which had built its nest on a barn at Zierow, which was hailed as an omen of good fortune to come.

Baron Biel informed me that these birds generally quit his neighbourhood about the same period in October, and in proof of the distance from which they come, one is preserved in the Museum at Rostock, near to which it was killed, having part of an African's arrow in its wing !

As I travelled over a great part of Germany, Ovid's typical allusion to the country often presented itself to my mind. He places her in two positions—sometimes as kneeling, or sitting in a dejected posture at the foot of her conqueror ; at others, recovering herself under the mildness of the Roman government. The last-named position is best suited to her at present ; but a foreigner, traversing some of the districts through which I passed, might be led to suspect either an exterminating angel had destroyed the first-born of the land, or, as was really the case, that a great portion of the population had been swallowed up by the devouring jaws of war. I travelled many miles, occasionally, without seeing a human face, or a cottage by the road side, and, on one particular day, upwards of seventy, without seeing more than one gentleman's seat. The absence of what are called country people, however, is, in some degree, to be accounted for by their living in villages for security.

I visited the breeding stud of the King of Prussia, at Neustadt, and was most hospitably entertained by Mr. Strubberg, who had (and I hope still has) the management of it; and, as he spoke English well, there was no bar to the attainment of the information I was in pursuit of. The place, from the immense number of stables, and the houses for the persons attached to them, had every appearance of a village, and is situated in a very fertile country. In these stables I found more than a hundred and thirty entire horses, and the amount of the whole stud exceeded five hundred. The principal aim of this establishment being to breed the coach horse, the saddle horse, or the trooper, the stud horses were either of pure or half Arab blood, which was found to succeed well, when crossed with that of the country. Amongst the Arabs of pure blood, was Borak, or Pet, as he was called when in England, and, next to a horse called Koylan, who was very perfect of his kind, he stood highest in estimation. I never saw an Arabian horse which pleased me until I saw Koylan. When in action, from the immense muscular powers which he displayed, he appeared to be half as big again as when standing still in his box—a sure criterion of his possessing the essential points for carrying high weight.

To shew the estimation in which this horse was held, it may be stated, that a Prussian nobleman was engaged to dine with Prince Hardenburg, Chancellor of the State, and consequently not a person to be trifled with ; and, moreover, they were strangers to each other, which rendered the forms of etiquette still more indispensable. The nobleman, however, found that if he kept his engagement with the prince, he must lose the sight of Koylan, and Koylan won the day.

Some time after my arrival in England, I was applied to by Mr. Strubberg to purchase an Arabian horse for this stud, if I could find one worthy of my notice. I consequently purchased Buckfoot—a horse of good character as a race-horse in India, and with a well-attested pedigree—of Mr. Thornbill, of Wadley, in Oxfordshire, for the sum of five hundred pounds. He was highly approved of, his stock being good, and all of his own colour, viz.—silver gray on a black skin ; but at the end of the second year of his being in the stud, he fell a victim, with eleven others of his kind, to a malignant disease that committed great ravages. Having ridden Buckfoot before I purchased him, he appeared to be the only Arab horse that I had ever come across, able to carry a man of twelve stone weight, at a quick rate, over a deeply-ploughed field in the winter. As for Borak, or any animal in his form, highly bred as he was, I should, for my own riding, as soon have thought of looking for that mysterious animal, his namesake, which is said to have carried Mahomet from Mecca to Jerusalem on his road to heaven. Borak was soon after this period drafted from the royal stud. From the very high caste, however, to which he is said to have belonged, he ought to have had a trial in England.

I was amused with the appearance and costume of the superintendants of this royal establishment; but I must say, I considered the economy of it very well arranged with regard to the safety of the stock. In each stable was a master-man in blue and gold, laced cocked-hat, leather breeches, and jack-boots, with a sword by his side, who had all the helpers under his command, and of whom there was one to every five horses. The head man of the paddocks was also similarly attired, had been fifty years in his situation, and knew the pedigree of every horse, mare, and colt, as well as he did his own name. Guards patrol the stables and paddocks day and night, to prevent accidents.

CHAPTER XI.

Hamburgh races—The Duke of Brunswick—German Jockey-club—Number of prizes—German horse-dealers—Owners of the running horses—Effects of racing in improving the German breed of horses—Races at Celle—the King of Hanover—Doubtful pedigrees—Exhibition of the government stock—A steeple-chase—Riding of the King of Hanover—Gray Momus—Untried stock—Advice of breeders—Racing in Brunswick—The Guelph Plate—Largest prize on the Continent—Sporting in Belgium—The King of Belgium—Count Duval—His address to the Senate on the subject of horse-breeding—Duke of Orleans—Lord Harry Seymour—A Belgian jockey—Prince Albert at Brussels—A race-ball at Brussels—A lady-patroness of sporting—Racing at Gand, Liege, and Aix-la-Chapelle.

By the kindness of some sporting German friends, I have it in my power to afford my readers the following proofs of the rapid progress horse-racing is making in a part of the world in which, twenty years back, a race-horse in training would have been considered a curiosity. I will commence with the Hamburgh races of July, 1840.

"The Hamburgh races of this year may truly take rank amongst those of first-rate excellence. A great number of horses came to the post, and almost every individual race afforded an interesting struggle. At least ten thousand spectators were on the ground, and the lively interest taken in the sport itself was to be found in the very crowded state of the saddling-yard, to which the charge of admittance was *half a sovereign* per head. Many strangers of distinction honoured the meeting with their presence; amongst them, his Serene Highness, the reigning Duke of Brunswick-Luneburg, who took an active part, as well as a truly sportsmanlike interest, in the good cause. It is also well to inform you, that a jockey-club has recently been established, composed of all the influential noblemen and gentlemen connected with the turf in Germany,—

the rules and regulations of which are the same as those of the parent society at Newmarket. And one of their first decisions will, I hope, have a good effect in preventing fraud, inasmuch as it enacts that the horses belonging to the Messrs. Lichtwald and Mr. Harts, although winners, shall not receive the amount of the prizes, until their owners shall have proved satisfactorily that the accusations brought against them, of having run horses at various meetings, under false pedigrees, are unfounded."*

During the two days of the meeting—the 22d and 25th of July—no less than fourteen prizes were contended for, all of them worth running for, and some of considerable value—quite equal, in fact, to those of our English provincial meetings. Amongst the best of them were, the King of Denmark's plate, 150*l.* to the winner, and 35*l.* to the second horse: the Hamburgh Altona subscription plate, 200*l.*, added to a sweepstakes of 15 louis-d'or each, P. P. (Nine subscribers.) A plate of 150*l.*, for horses of all countries. This was won by Blue-pill, by Physician, whom I saw run twice in England, a few months previously. He is now the property of Mr. G. Lichtwald, and ran in this race, as also for the King of Denmark's prize, which he also won, under the conditions specified by the jockey-club. There was a large field for both of these plates.

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* When I was in Germany, I met one of the Messrs. Lichtwalds, who was considered the first horse-dealer in the country, and the anecdote recorded by me of his filling up the hollow in a horse's back, which he sold to a neighbouring nobleman, may be remembered by some of my readers. The decision of the Hamburgh Jockey-club is well worthy of imitation in all countries in which racing is entered into, as it is in Germany, with a view to its legitimate object.

Amongst the owners of the race- horses —upwards of fifty in number—were his Serene Highness the Duke of Brunswick; his Serene Highness the Duke of Holstein-Augustenburg; Counts Hahn, Gueisenans, and Plessen; Barons Von Biel, Von Veltheim, Williamwitz, Maltzahns (brother to Count Plessen), and others of similar rank, whose names I cannot decipher.

I shall conclude this part of my subject with these few remarks:—First. Racing in Germany appears to be, with trifling exceptions, in the hands of those persons who will do it most credit, and will most advance its interests, having its legitimate end in view—namely, the improvement of the breed of horses. And it appears that great progress has already been made in breeding race-horses in Germany; as in reference to the Grand Duke Paul of Mecklenburg's plate, run for at this meeting, the same appears to have been won by a German-bred horse (English blood, of course), viz., Baron Biel's ch. c. Helicon, by Alphæus, out of Gallopade, by Reveller, beating all the English-bred horses in the race. I also wish to attract notice to the sweepstakes for two-year-old colts and fillies, bred on the Continent. Colts carry 8st. 5lbs.—a weight that must encourage the breeding of the right sort of horse, possessing substance and strength.

His Royal Highness Prince Charles of Prussia gives his name to a stake at this meeting, but there was no horse entered to it last year, although there were several subscribers.

I next have it in my power to offer an account of the races at Celle, in Hanover, on the authority of a correspondent in that part of the world.

"His Majesty, the King of Hanover," says he, "again honoured Celle, during the race-days, with his royal presence, condescending, in the most gracious manner, to take a lively personal interest in the sport, whilst his affability and courteousness of demeanour shed a lustre over the whole meeting, and could not fail of making a lasting impression on all present, including a great number of strangers, who, for the most part, partook of the hospitalities of the royal table, at the castle. His Serene Highness, the Duke of Brunswick, was a guest at the royal residence during the week. The company on the course was very numerous, but the number of horses which came to the post was not so great as the long list of nominations led us to expect."

It appears there were nine prizes here contended for, in addition to a steeple-race, proposed and won by Lieutenant Halkett, whose mare, Lady Emily, by Pelican, dam, Belle Alliance, beat three others. Amongst the former prizes was the King's plate, value 200 louis-d'or, won by Baron Biel's Helicon, beating four others; the Town plate, value 150 louis-d'or, won by Baron Veltheim's brown filly, Zebra; the prize of 125 louis-d'or, for continental horses of all ages; the Prince of Prussia's stakes, and the Prince Royal's (Prince George of Cumberland) whip, with 120 louis-d'or added, also won very easily by Baron Biel's Helicon, he being, as I have already stated, a German-bred horse. A produce stakes, for horses foaled in Hanover or Brunswick, was won by the Duke of Brunswick's bay filly, by Picton; as was also the two-year-old sweepstakes (15 louis-d'or, nine subscribers) by his serene highness's brown filly by Defence, out of Flounce, beating four others. For the Handicap for beaten horses in Celle and Brunswick, his serene highness's Laura also walked over.

It appears that at this meeting it was announced that in the case of the horses of doubtful pedigree, already mentioned in the account of the Hamburgh races, as well as in that of all Mr. Lichtwald's nominations, the same conditions were to be observed as at Hamburgh and Brunswick. In fact, the amount of the prizes, if won by them, was not to be paid over until the imputations cast on the parties accused were satisfactorily disproved.

I must not omit stating, that on the race-course, on the first day, the exhibition of the government stud took place; when, amongst other descriptions of racing stock, nine very fine thorough-bred horses were shewn, from whose produce great things are expected. Neither must I omit one incident in the steeple-race. The spectators, it appears, assembled in groups at different points of the line of country run over. His Majesty, the King of Hanover, took his station near the gate (four feet high), which was to be taken about the middle of the race; and after the five first horses had passed, his majesty followed them at the same pace, and *came in with them at the winning post!* "The elegant seat, and determined and rapid riding of the venerable monarch," adds my informant, "was the astonishment and admiration of all present." One horse fell at the gate, the only mishap that occurred, and his rider escaped injury.

As may be expected, some of our best racing blood is annually exported to Germany. Count Hahn has purchased Gray Momus, late the property of Lord George Bentinck, for a stud-horse, and he has every reason to hope that he will answer his end; but were I a German breeder of race-horses, I would purchase no horse whose produce had not been tried, and found to be good. Breeding from untried horses is a rock on which many enterprising sportsmen have been wrecked; and an extra thousand for a tried one might be money well laid out. Baron Biel also purchased three very fine mares at the late sale of the Underley (Mr. Nowell's) racing-stud, and he has been offered a large price for *Taurus*, whom he imported some time back. Nor is this to be wondered at, for I have good reason to believe, that all his produce which have started, up to this time, have either won or walked over for their engagements.

Everything connected with the turf is rapidly increasing in Brunswick, as indeed might be expected from the patronage and support given to it by the reigning duke. The race meetings have already done much, and will continue to do more, in working a great improvement in the breeding of horses in a neighbouring kingdom, long celebrated for those of a certain useful description.

The last meeting was honoured by the presence of his Majesty the King of Hanover, and a numerous assemblage of sportsmen of the first class on the Continent; but in consequence of the superiority of two of the racers—namely, Baron Veltheim's Zebra, by Gaberlunzie, dam by Lottery; and St. Swithin, by Velocipede, or St. Nicholas,—the interest otherwise attached to the principal prizes was, to a certain extent, abated. The last-named colt deserves to be ranked, whether as a racer or a stud-horse, in the first class of the immense number of thorough-bred horses imported of late years into the Continent; and nearly as much may be said of the duke's Defence colt, out of Flounce, and Count Henchel's Lonsdale, by Glencoe, out of Concealment, both of whom have proved that the expectations formed of them were well founded.

The Brunswick race-course is excellent, but far from an easy one for horses, the undulations of ground making it a constant and severe trial of their powers. All the arrangements, however, were excellent. Amongst the principal prizes were the following:—

The Duke's prize for three-year-olds, foaled on the Continent, 150 louis-d'or, added to a subscription of thirty louis-d'or. Won by Baron Veltheim's Zebra, beating three others.

Prize given by the committee for thorough-bred horses or mares, foaled on the Continent, 120 louis-d'or. Won by Baron Veltheim's ch. f. Rowtona, by Rowton.

The Town Plate, 100 louis-d'or. Won at two heats by Lonsdale, beating several others.

A Sweepstakes for two-year-olds, foaled on the Continent. Won by the Duke's br. colt, by Defence, out of Flounce, beating two others.

The Guelph Plate, given by the King of Hanover and the Duke of Brunswick, jointly, consisting of a very handsome cup, with 300 louis-d'or in specie, added to a subscription of thirty louis-d'or each, half forfeit, sixteen subscribers. Won by St. Swithen, beating four others. This prize, from the rank of the royal donors, as well as from its value, which exceeds that of any other hitherto given on the Continent, formed the grand object of the attraction; and great was the interest attached to the result; especially so, as it was the first year of its being decided on the Brunswick race-course. St. Swithen, the first favourite, came in an easy winner by a length, and was an object of universal admiration after the race.

I know not that I have any thing further to say on the subject of Germany and its pastimes, unless it be that I understand the *fête* of St. Hubert was celebrated on a grand scale by Count Hahn, who, my informant says, has added a story to his already most capacious castle, and likewise taken unto himself a wife, whom he represents as "one of the handsomest women on earth." What more can my kind and hospitable host wish for in this world? With one of the best studs of race-horses on the Continent, three packs of hounds in his kennels, perhaps the best shooting in Germany, a beautiful wife, and eighteen thousand a year to spend —surely his cup must be full.

The passion for sporting of all kinds, is every year increasing in Belgium— owing both its progress and success chiefly to the exertions of Count Duval de Beaulieu, the

Sir Charles Bunbury of his country; and, in part, to the patronage of the King, who gives a handsome cup at Brussels. I have thrice visited the Count at his fine chateau, near Athe, about thirty English miles from Brussels, during the annual celebration of the festival of St. Hubert, the patron of the Belgic chase, which continues for the entire week. We averaged, on these occasions, thirty-three each evening at the dinner table, all accommodated within the chateau; in the stables were at least forty-five horses belonging to the various guests, with servants essential to the care of them, *boarded and bedded in the house!* So much for Belgic hospitality.

As a proof of the zeal with which the Count enters into the pursuit and practice of the turf and horse breeding, on an improved system, he addressed the senate of his country on the 16th of February, 1835, at great length and with much ability, on the subject; and a correct report of his speech is given in the French and Belgic Racing Calendar, for the benefit of continental sportsmen.

There are two meetings in the year at Brussels, at which seventeen prizes were run for in 1840, one of which was won by the renowned Beggarman, sent by the Duke of Orleans for the purpose, with George Edwards, of Newmarket fame, to ride him. The prize being only three thousand francs (120*l.*), the act must have been considered a compliment paid to the meeting. I only attended these races once, when I saw some good sport, and one race which created extreme interest. In the spring of that year, the cup given by the King was won by a horse called Waverley, of English blood, but belonging to the "Société Vervietoise," (so called by being held at Verviers,) beating, amongst others, a horse called Morotto, the property of Lord Henry Seymour, sent from Paris for the purpose of carrying off this highly esteemed prize. Waverley was trained and ridden by a Belgic trainer and rider, named Olivier; Morotto was trained by Carter, of Newmarket celebrity, and ridden by Thomas Robinson, brother to the celebrated "Jem."

In the following September meeting the said Waverley was first favourite for the gold cup, Morotto and two other English horses being entered against him. Lord Henry, however, had determined on redeeming the honour of his stables and country; and sending to Newmarket for a four-year-old colt called Elizondo, by Camel, out of Leopoldine, he succeeded in beating this "crack" horse of the Belgians. With the exception of one who rides for Count Duval —and he rides well—Olivier is the only continental rider who deserves the appellation of jockey; and although he made a mistake in this race, by running against Morotto, who was intended only to make play for Elizondo, he is a good rider of a race, and looks the jockey, when mounted, as much as if he had been bred and received his education at Newmarket.

Some interest attaches to my visit to Brussels races, from the following circumstance: Arriving rather late on the course, we found such a throng of carriages and horsemen, that we were glad to alight and walk through the crowd, to the place where the sporting gentlemen were assembled; for admittance to which, tickets at a certain price were necessary. There were three handsome stands on the ground, one, of course, reserved for the use of the royal family and suite; but in consequence of the King having only returned from England on the preceding evening, their Majesties did not make their appearance until after the first heat had been run. They were accompanied by "the two young Princes of Saxe Coburg," as they were then denominated, nephews to his Majesty; and one of whom was his (now) *Royal* Highness Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria. Although it is not the custom of the country to cheer the royal family on such an occasion as this, they were received with every silent demonstration of respect, both on approaching and retiring from the stand, and by the English especially.

By way of leaving nothing undone that could give *éclat* to the occasion, a brilliant ball was given by the Count and his Countess, on the evening of the day I have been speaking of, at their hotel at Brussels. Seven rooms were thrown open, in which all the *élite* of the place were assembled, and amongst them several English, including one of our most celebrated characters on the turf, the winner of more St. Legers than any other man ever was, or ever will be. I never saw a ball at which better care was taken to keep mind and body in good humour with each other, than was taken here. Neither did I ever before see—not even at the Duke of Cleveland's, nor at the late Mr. Mytton's—so many gold cups as I witnessed in those rooms.

The Countess of Duval is quite as zealous in all that relates to Belgic sporting as is the Count himself—never missing a day with the hounds, and riding horses which would puzzle many of the ruder sex to handle as they should be handled, in the difficult country over which they travel at certain periods of the year.

In this part of the world, and within reach of Count Duval's stud, are races at

Gand, Liège, and Aix-la-Chapelle. In the course of the last year, there were ten prizes contended for at Gand; seven at Liège, on the plain of Droixke; and at Aix-la-Chapelle five, exclusive of a few trotting-matches, after the peculiar custom of the country.

CHAPTER XII.

SPORTING IN ITALY AND SWITZERLAND.

Races without riders—Duke of Lucca—Sporting at Florence—Campo di Marte—Princes Poniatowski—Their equipages—Florence race-course—Number of prizes—All won by English blood—Hurdle race—Forbidden by the Grand Duke—Racing in sections—Jerome Buonaparte—October meeting—A sporting princess—Large betting—Racing in Switzerland—Payerne—Captain Rossier—English blood—Singular trial of the strength of horses—Trotting in harness—Sporting in Switzerland.

From the jack-boot to the racing-saddle is a great jump, but it appears that neither education, habits, prejudices, nor climate, form a bar to the progress of what we call "the turf;" and although Italy is one of the last countries in the world in which we should expect to hear of it, it is creating much interest there, notwithstanding it has long been practised in a manner as unsatisfactory as it must have been ridiculous: I allude to the horses running without jockeys on their backs. It is now, however, conducted in the only way in which it can be either interesting to spectators or beneficial to the country.

The Duke of Lucca has been one of its great promoters amongst his own countrymen; but I have reason to believe it owes its origin to a committee formed at Naples, consisting of the Prince de Butera, Count Monte St. Angelo, and a few English gentlemen residing in that city and in Florence; amongst whom were Lords Normanby and Burghersh, Sir Richard Acton, Mr. Baring, &c. The first race, under the direction of this committee, took place on the 21st of January, 1829, for 200 piastres, and was won by an English horse. The King, with part of his family, was present, accompanied by a great number of equipages and horses.

It is on the Campo di Marte that the Naples race-course is situated, the road to which is one of varied beauties, with Mount Vesuvius constantly in sight—the extensive plain reaching from the base of the sea, and clothed with the richest verdure, even in the month of January. The numerous villages, and noblemen's and gentlemen's villas which stretch along the coast of the beautiful bay, bounded on three sides by high hills and rocks, which form the island of Capri, together with the view of Naples itself, render the scene unequalled for picturesque beauty and effect.

The most sporting place in Italy is Florence; that is to say, if the term "sporting" can be applied to the out-of-door amusements of modern Italy. The races of the two last years were very well attended. At the spring meeting of this year, there were present, the Princes Charles and Joseph Poniatowski, and Princess Eliza Poniatowski; the Duke and Duchess of Castigliano, the Duke of Talleyrand; ten marquises with their marchionesses; eight counts and two countesses: and amongst the English were Lord and Lady Rendlesham, Lord Edward and the Misses Somerset, Hon. Mr. and Lady Augusta Fox, Hon. Mr. and Mrs. St. John; Honourables Messrs. Saville and Erskine; Mr. and Lady Lucy Standish, Sir Joseph and Lady Hawley, Sir Francis Vincent, Mr. and Mrs. Vansittart; Messrs. Stanley, Young, and Chichester, &c. The equipages of the Princes Poniatowski are described as being of the very first style of elegance, particularly the sets of grey coach-horses, selected from the stables of Messrs. Elmore and Dyson, the celebrated London dealers.

The Florence race-course is only one mile from the town, at the Grand Duke's farm; and, as it is said not to admit of more than seven horses running abreast, it must be one of the middling order, inasmuch as horses must be often what in racing phraseology is termed "shut in," in their running, and thus deprived of their chance.

There were six prizes contended for on the first day of the last spring meeting, and four on the second, amongst which was what is called the Arno stakes of 200 francesconi, given by the jockey-club, (for here, too, is a jockey-club,) for thorough-bred horses of all ages—divided into two classes, and of course won by English horses; namely, Prince Joseph Poniatowski's Antrim, by Lapwing, out of Amber, three years old; and Signor Gasperini's Rivulet, by Brutamdorf, out of Streamlet, also three years old.

Then there was a hurdle-race on the first day, and as it was the first, so will it be the last ever seen at Florence, notwithstanding the interest it occasioned is said to have "beggared description." As is generally the case in these silly exhibitions, two of the horses fell, and, of course, their riders, to the indescribable consternation of a cluster of yokels amongst whom they were precipitated, and who dispersed with prodigious rapidity in every direction, imagining, in the extremity of their terror, that horses bestridden by bedlamitish fiends had descended amongst them.

Another hurdle-race, however, was made up for the second day, with additional leaps; but an enlightened philanthropist having represented to the police the extreme peril incurred, not only by the English riders, but also the risk the grand duke's true and liege subjects ran of being precipitated into a premature grave by being ridden over or jumped upon; and having concluded his petition by requesting that, at all events, a surgeon of celebrity might be in attendance to succour the maimed and the wounded, no second hurdle-race was attempted. The *chefs* of the police demanded an audience of the prime minister, and the said prime minister being unwilling to incur so tremendous a responsibility as the blood of the slain resting on his own head, put his *veto* on steeple-racing. I wonder what he would have thought of the tumbling scene at a late Liverpool exhibition of this cruel and unsportsmanlike practice—pastime I cannot call it.

At the spring meeting of the present year, matters appear to have been improving

—so many horses having been entered for the Arno stakes, that it was necessary to run them in sections (after the manner of greyhound sweepstakes), when the event is decided in the third heat by the winners of the two first sections only. The sum of 50*l.* was added to the stakes of this year, of five louis-d'or each; and to the Cup stakes of the second day, there were twenty-eight subscribers of five louis-d'or each.

The third day commenced with a sweepstakes of five louis-d'or each, for half-bred horses, those bred in Tuscany being allowed considerable weight. Prince Jerome Buonaparte had a horse in the race, which was beaten, the winner being an Italian-bred mare, the property of Signor Majenore.

The next prize of 80*l.* is only deserving notice, as shewing the estimation of the powers and capabilities of the various breeds of horses. Those bred in Italy were allowed 14 lbs.; Tuscany horses, 30 lbs., when contending with English horses. An English horse, Reviver, by Recovery, out of Primrose, was the winner.

The October meeting of the year 1840 fully realized the sanguine expectations formed of it, no less than thirteen prizes of various descriptions and value being contended for—commencing with a purse of 100 francesconi, given by the Jockey-club, and won by Sir Joseph Hawley's Capriolo, beating two others. The grand prize, the Arno purse of 200 francesconi, was won by Baron Lowenberg's br. h. Chateau Lafitte, by Chateaux Margeaux, beating five others, two of which belonged to Prince Charles Poniatowski, and one to the Prince Joseph, his brother. Chateau Lafitte afterwards won the Cup stakes; the 100 louis-d'or given by Colonel Demidoff; and was winning a match for thirty louis-d'or, against Prince Joseph Poniatowski's Antrim, when he slipt up and fell. He was the property, in the two last-named races, of Sir Joseph Hawley, who gave 300 louis-d'or for him. He appears to possess the unsubdued stoutness of his sire, who should not have been sent out of England, inasmuch as he was the best four-mile horse of his own year, and of many others besides. The history of this expatriated horse is a singular one. He was purchased by Mr. Tattersall, at two years old, from the Duke of Richmond, for the trifling sum of thirty pounds (without his engagements, which were heavy), and sent to Mr. Gasperine, a member of the Florence turf, and sold by him to Baron Lowenberg, for whom, at this meeting, he cleared in stakes and bets, 800 louis-d'or, besides the profit on the sum for which he was sold.

The Princes Poniatowski appear to be, among the natives, the principal supporters of the Florence races, and the following may be adduced as an instance of the spirit with which they enter into the sport. Prince Joseph's Antrim and Prince Charles's Eliza were the only two that came to the post for a sweepstakes of fifty francesconi, nine subscribers. A slashing race was the result, Antrim winning by a head. Five or six of the nobles of the country also enter the lists with about the same number of Englishmen, with English jockeys of course.

The Princess Camerata intends making a grand start next year, having sent to England for horses. But the most startling fact in reference to this meeting, in its comparatively young days, is the extent of the betting, and the spirit with which some of the horses were backed by their too confident owners. For example: Prince Charles is said to have "dropped" 20,000 francs—*Anglice* 800*l.*, in bets alone, at this meeting, great part of which were on his own mare Eliza, said not to be quite fit.

Even Switzerland is not without its races and its jockey-club. The former are held at a small town called Payerne; but which, from its central position on the high-roads to Basle, Berne, Geneva, and Lausanne, may be said to be well selected for the purpose. The principal sportsman is a Captain Rossier, who, two years back, honoured me with a long letter, detailing some of his proceedings, and asking my advice on the selection and management of his stud. The captain has been once in England, and saw the Derby won by Moses; and, after making a few purchases, returned to his own country, enamoured with ours, which foreign horse-amateurs never fail to be. One sentence in his letter surprised me; namely, that Switzerland was not favourable to the breeding of horses, by reason of the high value of the land. This gentleman, however, has greatly benefited his country by the introduction of English blood, and every expression in his letter breathes an enthusiastic spirit in the pursuit in which he has embarked.

In such very young days, it would not be fair to criticise the sports of the Payernian turf, at present confined to the powers of draught and the trot. The following graphic description of a display of the first-named useful qualification in a horse—in hilly countries especially—is thus given, borrowed from a sporting contemporary:—

"For *l'épreuve de force*, thirty-seven horses came to the post. A drag of unusual length, laden with sacks of wheat, weighing ninety-six hundred pounds, Swiss weight,* rested on smooth boards at the extremity of a road covered with a layer of sand, which increased in the proportion of an inch to every three feet in length. Each horse was harnessed, singly, to this immense wain; but the whip, or the goad, or even shouts or other devices were strictly prohibited. Left to the freedom of their own inclinations, but few staggered with the enormous draught more than a few yards through the deep and deepening layer of sand; for the proportionate ascent at each and every step in advance, of course, augmented, terrifically, the severity of the test to which the powers and gameness of each animal were subjected.

" After the indifferent performances of some ten or twelve horses, a magnificent black mare came forth. She was sixteen hands high, short-limbed, with extraordinary depth of chest and girth, undeniable hocks and quarters, and the strength and substance of Reid's dray-horses. Her eyes full and prominent, and head beautifully put on, confessed English blood; and she proved to be the produce of a Swiss mare, by a Yorkshire horse called Sultan, who was stationed in the canton of Friburgh.

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* The Swiss pound weight is one eighth more than the English.

"The mare was harnessed to the wain—started off, at the first effort, with a tremendous load—gamely struggled through the increasing depth of sand—and although fearfully distressed, actually staggered past the judge's stand, which was considered the ultimatum of any horse's powers. I have seldom seen, even in England, a nobler creature than this fine mare, who so eminently combined perfection and symmetry of form with prodigious strength and indomitable courage. More than twenty horses appeared afterwards at the post, but none of their owners had the temerity to hope to take the shine out of the Sultan mare, to whom the first prize was unanimously awarded."

All the other prizes were contended for by horses *trotting in harness*, and their number amounted to fifty-three. No doubt, in the course of time, the *course au galop*, as the French term it, will take precedence of the trot; and like the postboy's horse that was ridden in pursuit of John Gilpin the renowned, the " lumbering of the wheels" will be gladly dispensed with by the nags.

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